CHRISTS Commination against SCANDALIZERS:

OR,

T342.94

A Treatise wherein the *Necessitie, Nature, Sorts,* and *Evils* of *Scandalizing* are clearly and fully handled.

With resolution of many questions, especially touching the abuse of *Christian liberty*:

Shewing that vengeance is awarded against such as use it to the grievance of their weake Brethren.

By *Iohn Tombes.* Minister of Gods Word.

1 Cor. 8.12.

When ye sinne so against the brethren, and wound their weake conscience, ye sinne against Christ.

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To the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

IOHN

LORD VISCOVNT SCUDAMORE.

Right Honourable,

IT *is neceſſary that Chriſtians ſhould bee warned of ſin againſt God, leſt they incurre his wrath. And withall it is as neceſſary that the ſins of which men are warned ſhould be*

plainely, and diſtinctly declared. Without the one mens conſciences will ſinne without feare: without the other they will feare where no feare is: the defect of the former will make conſciences ſecure: the want of the later perpetually unquiet, or ſetled in errour. And errours in conſcience produce many great evills not onely ad intra *in mens owne ſoules, but alſo* ad extra *in humane affaires. The endeavouring then to direct mens conſciences in practique caſes cannot but be a needfull and charitable worke.*

And ſurely as it is uſefull in other arguments, ſo very needfull in this of ſcandals,

dals. Few there bee that heed the terrible commination of our Saviour againſt ſcandalizers, and therefore are affected as if by tranſmigration they had Cains *ſpirit, when he ſaid* nunquid ego fratris mei cuſtos? *Whence it is that offences are multiplyed dayly, many ſoules periſh, alienations of minde, ſchiſmes, jarres and warres too ariſe. Wee wiſh, wee pray, I would wee might ſay we hope for a true union and conſolidation of mens minds. Certainly it is not to be hoped without removeall of ſcandals. On the other ſide the greivous threatning of our Lord Chriſt doth ſo affright ma-*

ny consciences, that they are almost irresolute in every thing they doe before men, as fearing least there be anguis in herba, *some scandall in it. In my small reading and experience I find few doubts of conscience, concerning mens patent actions, in the resolving of which the difficulty hath not most of all rested on this point of scandals.*

Which considerations moved me to apply some part of my studies to cleare this argument, and to remove this evill. And having in this forme fashioned a treatise, I cannot say polished, it is now produced into the light for publique good by discovery of truth.

truth. Such as it is I humbly preſent to your Lordſhip, as to a perſon made honourable not only by your high dignities, but alſo by your noble vertues, manifeſted abroade in your employments of State, and in this your native countrey (wherein as in your proper Orbe you ſhined many yeares tanquam ſtella primæ magnitudinis) *by your eminent prudence and integrity in government, and by your rare, pious, and large munificence in reſtoring tithes, and beſtowing lands and building on the Church, and indeared to my ſelfe by reaſon of that noble favour by which your Honour hath beene*

pleaſed to cheare me in this very great, and very poore Cure, in and under which I now labour. Which I beſeech your Honour to accept of as from him that rejoyceth in the proſperity of your Honour and your noble Houſe, and ſtudies to acquite himſelfe

Your Honours in moſt

humble obſervance

IOHN TOMBES.

TO

TO
THE READER.

Chriſtian Reader.

FOR preventing of miſtakes I intreat thee to take notice. 1. That whereas I finde the word [*Scandall*] in common ſpeech & ſome writings uſed as if it did ſignify a ſlander or evill report, I conceive that ſuch uſe of the word [*Scandall*] in that ſenſe is different from the proper notation and uſe thereof: and therefore is omitted by me in this treatiſe. For though a ſlander may be a ſcandall, yet *ratio nominis*, or the notion and conceit of them is different; the one ſignifying a falſe report of another in reſpect of the

ſpeaker whether the party ſlandered know of it or not, be offended or not: the other generally ſignifies all ſuch acts whereby mens minds are harmed in reference to the perſon harmed, as I have declared *chap:* 1. and 2. of this treatiſe. 2. That whereas I uſe the tearme [regard] ſundry times, eſpecially *chap.* 4. in ſuch a ſenſe as it carries *Rom.* 14. 6. where our laſt tranſlatours by it render [Φρονεῖ] uſed there by the Apoſtle, and I ſay ſuch a ſcandall is not to be regarded or not regardeable, my meaning is not as if it were not ſimply to be regarded, but in every reſpect to bee neglected, ſo as that we ſhould not at all be bound to be greived for anothers harme cauſed by his owne wilfullneſſe or ill diſpoſition, nor to pray or uſe other Chriſtian meanes

to

to redreſſe it, but onely this, that we are not ſo to regard it as to conceive our ſelves bound in conſcience to omit our action, or to charge our ſelves with ſinne if we doe that thing upon which ſcandall followes in the caſes there mentioned. 3. That there are in the print ſundry faults eſcaped in the few Hebrew and Greeke and Latin words, in the running title, in the numbers of ſections in the margint, in the interpunctions, and letters, which becauſe I conceive the learned will eaſily amend, and they are not likely either to hinder or pervert the underſtanding of the reſt, I have thought beſt not to burden the table of *Errata* with them, but have collected theſe few that follow as the moſt materiall.

Errata.

PAge 8. line 21. for *baſtes* read *beaſtes*. p. 19. l. 6. for *Sandalls* r. *Scandalls*. p. 76. l. 5. for *and* r. *are*. p. 77. l. 3. dele *then*. p. 80. l. 11. for *due it* r. *due to it*. p. 104. l. 18. for *occaſion* r. *occaſion of*. p. 118. l. 8. for *it that* r. *in that*. p. 285. l. 15. for *wife* r. *wife*. p. 392. l. 12. for *they* r. *there*. p. 410. l. 18. for *changeth* r. *chargeth*. p. 433. l. 18. for *intrence* r. *entrench*.

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VÆ SCANDALIZANTIUM.

Luke. 17. 1. 2.

1 *Then ſaid he to the Diſciples, it is impoſſible but that offences will come, but woe unto him through whom they come.*

2 *It were better for him that a milſtone were hanged about his neck, and he caſt into the ſea than that he ſhould of-*

ſend one of theſe litle ones.

Cap. I.

Of the meaning of the Text, and the neceſsity of Scandalls.

§ 1. Eccl. 12. 11 *The ſpeaker and occaſion of the words.*

THe wordes of the wiſe (ſaith *Solomon*) *are as goades, and as nailes faſtned by the maſters of aſsemblies: which are given from one Shepheard:* Such words are theſe: *the words of the wiſe*, even of him who is Wiſdome it ſelfe, *given from one Shepheard*, even him who is ἀρχιποιμην, the chiefe & only Shepheard, and Biſhop of ſoules

ſoules to the maſters of aſſemblies, the holy Apoſtles, to be, as goades to provoke unto love, and as nailes to faſten men in unity. All the words of this preacher were acceptable words, and although all are not written, yet *all that are written are upright, even words of truth.* This preſent ſpeech was conceived ſo uſefull, that two of the Evangeliſts have preſerved the firſt part: S. *Luke* here, and Saint *Mathew* Ch. 18. 7. and three the latter part: S. *Luke* here, S. *Matthew* with ſome inverſion of the order uſed by S. *Luke*, and Saint *Marke*,

2

ch.9. 42. The occaſion of this ſpeech is diſtinctly related by S. *Matthew*, to wit, the diſciples diſceptation about preeminence; to decide which controverſie our Saviour ſets before them a litle child, as an embleme of humility, and upon this text reads a lecture to them, of which theſe words are part, S. *Marke* ch.9.39. inſerts another accident, to wit, S. *Iohns* forbidding ſome that were not in Chriſts retinue, to caſt out Divels in his name, togither with our Saviours reply. Saint *Luke* ch.9.v.46.&c. relates the ſame accidents, but not this part, of his dif-

courſe in this place. In which it is in vaine to ſeeke for connexion. That which *Maldonate* hath obſerved is right, that the occaſion is plainly ſet downe, and the order right in S. *Matthew*; here in S. *Luke* the words are put *loco alieno* in another place.

§ *The partition of the text.*

Theſe two verſes in S. *Luke* doe containe three Categorical propoſitions: in S. *Matthew* there is a fourth put before two other, which is, *woe to the world becauſe of offences*: which becauſe my text omitteth I ſhall let it paſſe. Of the three propoſitions in S. *Luke*, the firſt is Modall,

and declareth the neceſsity of *Scandalls: It is impoſsible but that offences will come:* the ſecond foretells the wofull condition of Scandalizers: *woe unto them through whom they come*: the third v. 2. aggravates that woe to them that Scandalize one ſort of perſons called *little ones*, by an uneven compariſon of their woe with a leſſe, but a very grievous one: *It were better &c.*

§ 3. *The explication of the word Scandall in the proper acception.*

To begin with the firſt propoſition Ἀνένδεκτόν ἐστι τὸ μὴ ἐλθεῖν is as much as Ἀνάγκη ἐστὶν ἐλθεῖν, in Saint *Matthew* Ἀνένδεκτόν ἐστι, is as much as ἐκ ἐνδέχεται often uſed by *Ariſtotle* as equi-

equivalent to ἀδύνατον ἐστι: and it doth here void an unavoidable neceſſity. And ἐλθεῖν is as much as εἶναι or γένεσθαι, to be or happen. That which moſt requires explication is the word σκάνδαλα tranſlated offences: which word is originally a greek word, but by uſe taken into our Engliſh language, as it is into the Latine & other tongues: it is very frequent in the new Teſtament: Greek Grammarians tell us that originally Σκάνδαλον ſignified ſome part of a trap made to kill or catch wild beaſts: *Heſychius* in his *Lexicon*, Σκάνδαλον τὸ ἐν μυάγραις, *Scandall*, *a*

part of mouſe-traps. The Greek Scholiaſt on *Ariſtophanes* his *Acharn*: and *Suidas* after him tell us that σκανδάληθρα, were certain crooked peeces of wood, unto which wild beaſts coming (becauſe the bait was thereunto faſtned, ſay ſome) did caſt downe on themſelves, or caſt themſelves upon ſome frame of wood, by which they were hurt, killed, maimed, or made halte and ſo caught: and therefore they derive theſe words ἀπὸ τοῦ σκάζειν, from halting which hapned to the baſts that daſhed on them. Such accidents the Prophet *Iſaiah* intimates

Lexic. in voce Σκανδάληθρα.

to

to follow on the putting of σκάνδαλα *Isay.* 8. *v.* 15. where foretelling that Christ should be צור מכשול translated by S. *Peter* 1. *Pet.* 2. 7. πέτρα σκανδάλου he tells us that *many shall stumble and fall, and be broken and be snared, and be taken:* But what ever the originall of the word be, certain it is, that in the new Testament it is *Synonymous* to προσκομμα, that at which a man dasheth his foot, as *Rom.* 14. 13. S. *Paul* puts these two words as of the same sense, *Rom.* 11. 9. σκάνδαλον is used as equivalent to παγὶς & θήρα, which signify a snare or toyle, by

which in hunting wild beaſts are taken. By which words the Hebrew words מכשול from כשל to fall (to which σκάνδαλον moſt aptly anſwers) and מקש and מוקש uſed *Pſal.* 69.22. *Iſai.* 8.14.15. which ſignify a gin, or ſnare, are rendred by the Apoſtle. Out of that which hath bin ſaid, we may eaſily perceive that a Scandall in the notatiõ of the word ſignifies ſuch a block, piece of wood, ſtone or the like, at which a beaſt or man daſhing or hiting themſelves fall or otherwiſe catch harme, as by bruiſing maining, halting or the like.

Scandall

Scandall in the scripture use.

Scandall then properly is applied to that wherby the body is hurt the laying of which is forbidden *Levit.* 19. 14. and therefore a woe belongs to him that laies it. But here doubtleſſe our Saviour means not ſuch a ſtumbling-block as hurts the body, but (as it is commonly tranſlated to ſignify) ſuch a one as whereby the mind or ſoule is harmed. Now the harming of the mind is by cauſing griefe, and ſo *Rom.* 14. 15. λυπεῖται *is grieved*, is as much as σκανδαλίζεται *is ſcandalized*, or ſtirring up anger, diſpleaſure, enmity, as whē our Saviour ſaith *Math.*

17.27. ἵνα μὴ σκανδαλίσωμεν *that we may not ſcandalize them*, that is, we may not provoke them to anger or enmity againſt us. But chiefly the mind or ſoule is harmed by committing ſin, as the *action of him that ſate at meat in the Idols temple* became a Scandall *in emboldning others to cõmunicate with Idolaters in Idol-ſervice* 1. *Cor.* 8. 9. 10. and *Balaam* is ſaid to teach *Balac to lay a ſtumbling block before the children of Iſrael* to eat things ſacrificed to Idols, and to *commit fornication*, *Revel.* 2. 14. which hurt of the ſoule is by laying it open to Gods wrath, and by defiling

filing and wounding the conſcience: And here is to be noted, that whereas in common uſe to offend is as much as to diſpleaſe, in the Scripture uſe he is ſaid to be offended who is induced to ſin, though he be pleaſed thereby: ſo that to offend, is not onely to diſpleaſe, but alſo to harme the ſoule even by pleaſing. Now this *læſio animi*, hurting of the minde is ſometimes by a meere object without, at which the perſon offended daſheth himſelfe, and hurteth his ſoule, the thing which is the ſcandall acting nothing to move the perſon to harme himſelfe

himſelfe, which therefore may not unfitly bee called an objective ſcandall. Thus images, ſilver and gold are termed, *Ezek.7.19. The ſtumbling block of mens iniquity.* So was the *Babyloniſh* garment to *Achan*, *Bathſheba's* nakedneſſe to *David*, the Altar of *Damaſcus* to [illegible]; &c. Such are to many others a glaſſe of wine, a wanton picture, a book of *Magick*, and the like. Now in this ſort of ſcandall it is the perſon hurt that ſcandalizeth himſelfe, as being active therein: and therefore moſt truly the ſcandall is in himſelfe. In which reſpect S. *Iohn* 1. Epiſt.

Pſ.69.23. Rom.11.9

Epiſt. Ch. 2. v. 10. tels us *that hee that loveth his brother abideth in the light*, καὶ σκάνδαλον ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν, *and a ſcandall is not in him*, that is, hee doth not make his neighbours proſperity his brothers preferment, &c. to be a ſtumbling block to him to make him covetous, envious, &c. For the *antitheſis*, v. 11. and the coherence of the text ſhew it to be meant not of ſcãdall, whereby through defect of love a mã cauſeth another to ſtumble, but of ſcandall whereby a man may cauſe himſelf to fall for want of light in himſelfe. And to the ſame purpoſe it is ſaid in that

that parallel place, *Pſal.* 119. 165. *Great peace have they which love thy law,* ואין למו מכשול *and there is no ſtumbling blocke to them*, that is, by reaſon of their adhering to Gods law, outward objects become not ſcandall to them.

§. *Of the ſorts of effective ſcandall.*

2 Sometimes the hurting of the ſoule is by the action of another, which I therefore call effective ſcandall, as *Ieroboams* ſetting up the golden Calves was a ſcãdall to *Iſrael: Davids* ſin a ſcandall in cauſing the enimies of the Lord to blaſpheme. Now ſuch actions may bee ſcandall three

three waies. 1. *In potentia*, in possibility onely, when the action is in it's nature scandalous, or in the intention of the agent, but not so in the event, because of the stedfastnesse and uprightnes of the person tempted. So was the action of *Iosephs* Mistris to *Ioseph*. *Peters* persuasion to our Lord *Christ*, *Mat*. 16. 23. and this is termed *Scandalum datum, sed non acceptum, given but not taken*. 2. *In actu, actually*. In the event, but not frō the nature of the action, or intent of the agent, but by accident by reason of the erroneous judgement, or evill disposition

poſition of the perſon ſcandalized, as *Chriſt's* preaching of eating his Fleſh, and drinking his Blood was a ſcandall, *Iohn* 6. 60. 61. and the preaching of Chriſt crucified is to carnall men. 1. *Cor.* 1. 23. and is termed *Scandalum acceptũ ſed non datum*, a ſcandall *taken though not given*. 3. *Inactũ & per ſe*, actually in the event, and of it ſelfe, that is from the nature of the action, as in *Davids* ſinne, 1. *Sam.* 12. 14. Or intent of the agent, as in *Balaams* fact, *Rev.* 2. 14. In *Ieroboam's* fact, 1. *Kings* 12. 29. 30. and this is termed, *Scandalum datum & acceptũ*:

4.

a ſcandall both taken and given.

Now although I conceive our Saviour intended ſpecially this laſt ſort of Sandalls in this place, they being the ſcandals by which a woe comes to the world, and a woe belongs to the authors of thē, yet I know no abſurdity in it to extend this propoſition in the handling of it to all thoſe ſorts of ſcandalls, by which the ſoules or minds of men are hurt. According to which the ſenſe is this. It is impoſſible or it cannot bee otherwiſe, but that mens minds or ſoules will bee hurt with diſplicency, griefe

§.6. *The neceſſity of ſcāndals.*

griefe, anger, enmities, ſinns occaſioned by outward objects & actions of men, which either by accident, or of themſelves become ſcandalls to them. So that our Saviours aſſertion is in briefe this: *That while men live on earth there will certainly be offences and ſcandalls to the harm of mens ſoules.* When our Saviour tels us, *Mat.* 13.41. That in the Conſummation or end of the world, *the ſonne of man ſhall ſend his Angells, and they ſhall gather out of his kingdome* πάντα τὰ σκάνδαλα *all ſcandalls*, hee doth plainely intimate that till then

then there will bee ſcandals even in his Church; that the Church in it's preſent condition on earth is but as a *field in which wheat and tares grow together*, ſcandals and good example: that it is a mixt company of good and bad; wiſe, and fooliſh; weake, & ſtrong; and therefore ſcandalls will ariſe.

§. 7. *In reſpect of ſcandalizers.*

This neceſſitie of ſcandalls is. 1. In reſpect of the ſecond cauſes. 2. In reſpect of the firſt & ſupreme cauſe of al things. The ſecond cauſes are, 1. The perſons ſcandalizing. 2. Scandalized. 3. Satan, who hath ever a

a finger in all miſchievous things. 1. A neceſsity of Scandalls is from Scandalizers; firſt, in generall from vitiouſneſſe of life which every where abounding makes ſcandals to abound. All ſin againſt God is venemous: it being the very poyſon of the old Serpent. And all open ſins are like the *Baſilisk* infecting thoſe that come within the ſight of them, unleſſe well fenced with Antidotes. It is ſo connatural to men, that they are ready not onely to take, but even to ſuck in the infection. *Faciles imitandis turpibus ac pravis omnes ſumus.* In opē

ſins

ſins ſcarſe any man ſins alone: ſpecially if their perſons bee eminent either in authoritie, dignitie, or any other reputed excellencie: One *Ieroboam* is ſufficient to make a whole kingdome to ſin: the prophaneneſſe of one *Hophni* is enough to cauſe a whole Church *to abhorre the offerings of the Lord.* And if perſons be not ſcandalized with infection of open ſinnes; yet doubtleſſe they will be with griefe of minde; ſo that one way or another all open ſins ſinnes will beget ſcandalls, and therefore ſuch ſins being ſo many and ſo certaine, it cannot bee but that there

there ſhould bee an innumerous brood of ſcandalls. 2. But beſides vitiouſneſſe of life in generall, there are ſome ſpeciall evills by which ſcandalls are multiplied. As 1. by malice. There are that doe *data opera* of ſet purpoſe lay ſnares for their brethren. It is the delight of ſome to be Satans agents to harm the ſoules of their brethren, *they ſleep not except they have done miſchiefe, and their ſleepe is taken away unleſſe they cauſe ſome to fall. Prov.* 4.16. *Balak* hires *Balaam, Balaam* deviſeth and teacheth *Balak to lay a ſtũbling block before the children*

children of Iſrael, Rev. 2. 14. *Ionadab* the ſonne of *Shimeah* directs *Ammon* how to commit Inceſt with his ſiſter, 2. *Sam.* 13 5. And theſe promoters of ſcandalls are likely none of the dulleſt, but the moſt active and ſubtill: Satan hath wit enough to chooſe the ableſt inſtruments for his purpoſe. They uſe craft, eloquence, diligence *uſq; ad extremum virium, to the utmoſt of their power* to further evill. So devoted they are to the divells ſervice that he can have them ready to ſerue his turne at ſmall wages, *magna merces quieta movere.* It's wages enough

for thē to doe hurt. Their own diſpoſition makes them active of their own accord. And this cauſe muſt needs be a fruitfull mother of ſcandalls. Secondly, proud contempt of their brethren cauſeth many ſcandalls: while men ſleight the harme of their brethren, that they may have their own wills: As thoſe, *Rom.* 14. 3. that deſpiſed thē that did not eat as themſelves & *thoſe whoſe knowledge puffed up*, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, *Cor.* 8. 1. Thirdly, Imprudence in many cauſeth ſcandalls: for ſo it may bee that men may by their ſpeech and actions ſcandalize through ignorance

ignorance, as S. *Peter* did *Mat.* 16. 23.

§ 8. *Of persons Scandalized.*

2 Nor are ſcandalls more avoidable, if wee conſider the qualities of perſons ſcandalized. For as ſome are prone to lay ſtumbling blocks, ſo others are as apt to ſtumble at them. Firſt, Generally unmortified, or prevalent corruptions diſpoſe men to fall by ſcandals. *Silly women laden with ſinne, led away with divers luſts, are eaſily deceived by thoſe that have a forme of godlineſſe but deny the power of it.* 2. Tim. 3. 6. *And thoſe that receive not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved, but have*

pleaſure in unrighteouſneſse, are not onely by Gods juſt judgement, but alſo by their owne propenſitie enſnared *by ſignes, lying wonders, deceaveableneſse of unrighteouſneſſe and ſtrong deluſions to believe lies.* 2. *Theſſal.* 2. 9. 10. 11. 12. Corrupt qualities make men like ſtraw or tinder, the leaſt ſparke of evill example or counſell will ſet them on fire. Yea bare objects if ſeen or heard of will overthrow them. A voluptuous man ſhall not need to be invited to ſports, merriments &c. *Sponte ſua properat, he runnes of his own accord*, he will ſmell them out

out himſelfe as a *vultur* doth a Carcaſe. Even as ſores of the body will draw corrupt humors to them, ſo will vitious hearts make ſcandals to themſelves.

Secondly. In ſpeciall ſome particular ſinnes make ſome accidents to become a ſtumbling block to them. Enmity againſt our Lord Chriſt his perſon, impatience to be rebuked, falſe opinions from example of others, common conceit, weakneſſe from ignorance, dulneſſe to conceive, miſtakes of his ſpeeches, cauſed the *Phariſes* and others to ſtumble at Chriſt and his

words. *Math.* 13. 57. *Mat.* 15. 12. *Ioh.* 6. 61. *Ioh.* 7. 3. 48. ſpirituall pride made the Iewes *Rom.* 9. 32. to ſtumble at Chriſt: ignorance of their brethrens liberty made thoſe weake ones mentioned *Rom.* 14. to ſtumble at their brethrens lawfull practiſe, & fearfulneſſe of heart cauſed *Peter* and the Diſciples to be offended upon Chriſts apprehenſion. *Mat.* 26. 31. Even as a miſt afore the eyes, miſtake of the uneveneſſe of the way, haſty going, a ſudden weakneſſe, and many more ſuch accidents may cauſe the body to ſtumble, that otherwiſe

wiſe hath not any ſetled debilitating ſickneſſe: ſo in the minde many ſcandals may ariſe from alienations of minde, miſ-reportes, miſtakes &c. both of them that are habitually depraved by a corrupt luſt, and alſo of them that are otherwiſe right hearted.

§. 9. *Of Satan.*

3 Nor may we forget the agency or working of Satan, in aſſigning the cauſes of Scandalls. For he is the *primus motor, the firſt mover*, the incendiary in all theſe miſchievous things. It is his imployment to *walke about ſeeking whom he may overthrow and devoure.* He hath a trap for a *Iu-*

das, a ſnare for a *Simon Magus*, a gin for *Ananias* and *Sapphira*. And he wants not a ſtumbling block for a *David*, a *Peter*, or any of the beſt of Gods Saints. And theſe he laies thick, with much art and cunning, baiting each with his peculiar baite, that were it not for the wonderfull care of the Almighty, by his preventing and ſuſtaining grace, no man could eſcape overthrow by them: ſo that if we conſider the ſecond cauſes we ſee reaſon enough of the multitude of Scandalls.

§ 10. *Of God.*

Let us raiſe our thoughts higher, from earth to heaven, from the

ſecond to the firſt, from the ſubordinate to the ſupreme Cauſe, and from thence we ſhall ſee a reaſon of the neceſſity of Scandalls. The prediction of them by God proves the neceſſity of them, for Gods preſcience cannot be deceived. But theſe following texts of Scripture doe import more then a neceſſity by preſcience, to wit, a neceſſity by appointment or ordinance of Gods will: And *voluntas Dei eſt rerum neceſſitas*, it's an axiom in the Schooles, *Gods will is the neceſsity of things*: *Chriſt is a ſtone of ſtumbling and a rock of offence*,

even to them which ſtumble at the word being diſobedient, whereunto alſo they are appointed, ſaith S. *Peter.* 1. *Ep. ch.* 2. 8. *Behold I lay in Sion a ſtumbling ſtone and rock of offence. Rom.* 9. 33. *God hath given them the ſpirit of ſlumber, &c. Rom.* 11. 8. 9. *And for this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe a lye.* 2. *Theſ.* 2. 11. So that whatever be the way, it is from God that Scandalls fall out: and therefore there is a neceſſity of them.

Ezek. 3. 20.

§ 11. *For what ends ordered by him.*

But we may here aske with the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 11. 11. *Have they ſtumbled that they ſhould fall?*

Are

Are ſcandals ordered by God onely for the ruine of men? Doubtleſſe no: There are other ends aimed at by God in the event of ſcandals, both in reſpect of him ſelfe, & of men. In reſpect of himſelfe he orders the happening of ſcandals to become ſubſervient to the fulfilling of his owne counſell. *Pharoahs* ſtumbling was made an occaſion to ſhew *Gods power*, *Exod.9.16.* and the diſobedience of *Hophni* and *Phinehas* for the inflicting of Gods juſt vengeance, 1.*Sam.* 2.25. & the unbeliefe of the *Iewes*, *the ſhewing mercy to the Gentiles*, *Rom.* 11.31.32.

In

In all of them there is a *depth of wiſdome, riches of knowledge in God, who by unſearchable judgements and undiſcernable paths*, brings his owne counſells to paſſe, v.33. Though wee know not how, nor why God doth permit ſuch pernicious evils as ſcandals in thē-ſelves be, yet the *Almighty whoſe thoughts are above our thoughts, whoſe waies are higher then our waies doth know.* This wee are to hold as certaine. God lets nothing, no not ſcandals to fall out without excellent, though unſearchable wiſdome, for righteous and good, though undiſcernable

cernable ends? And yet God doth not ſo conceale this matter, but that wee ſo far know his minde, that hee intends ſcandals, as for the intrapping of falſe hearted diſobedient perſons, ſo for the probation of thē that are ſincere: The wōders and ſignes of falſe Prophets, and Dreamers of dreames were permitted ſometimes *to come to paſſe, to try whether wee love the Lord our God with all our heart, & with all our ſoule.* Deut. 13. 3. And *oportet eſſe hæreſes, there muſt be alſo hereſies that they which are approved may be made manifeſt*, 1. Cor. 11. 19. *And in*

in the buſineſſe of the Embaſſadours of the Princes of Babylon, who ſent unto Hezekiah to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart, 2. *Chron.* 32. 31. So that one while God diſcovers a ſecret Hypocrite; another while manifeſts the hidden corruption or weakneſſe that is evẽ in a godly perſon. Here he lets a ſtumbling block be the deſtruction of an obdurate ſinner, there it becomes to bee the witneſſe of the faith, obedience, patience aud conſtancy of an upright believer. S. *Auguſtines* ſaying

Enchir. ad Laur c. 96.

ſaying is received in ſchooles, *Niſi eſſet hoc bonum ut eſſent & mala, nullo modo eſſe ſinerentur ab omnipotente bono: unleſſe this were good that there ſhould be evills, they would by no means be ſuffered to be by the omnipotent good.* Nor is the laying of ſcandals leſſe evill in man, becauſe God permits them to be for righteous & good ends. For however they bee ordered by good intendmẽts in God, yet they proceed from evill principles in men: and therefore are no whit the leſſe vitious in men, becauſe by accident to their intentions good is willed by God.

As

As when it is ſaid of *Ioſephs* brethren, *Gen.* 50. 20. *they thought evill againſt him, though God meant it unto good*, their ſin was not the leſſe becauſe Gods goodneſſe was the greater.

§. 12. *The application 1. To iuſtifie religion notwithſtanding the ſcandals of the profeſſors of it.*

For application of this truth. 1. From hence we may frame ſome anſwer to thoſe that accuſe religion by reaſon of the Scandalls that are given by them that profeſſe it. If Scandals fall out among Proteſtants, preſently the Papiſts inferre, that we are not the true Church, the Separatiſt that we are but an Antichriſtian Synagogue, the *Libertine*, and

Car-

Carnall worldling, that thoſe that profeſſe more piety, then themſelves affect, are but a ſort of hypocrites. As if where there fall out any diſſentions between the Teachers, any evill practiſes in the Schollers, there could be no true doctrine, nor good men, nor holy ſociety. But theſe inferences are indeed nothing elſe but the unjuſt accuſations of malitious minds. For if malice did not blind them, they might by the ſame *medium* conclude againſt themſelves, there being no ſort of men among whom evill practiſes doe not happen. Even

ven among the diſciples of Chriſt there was a theefe, in the firſt Church of Chriſtians there were a paire of Sacrilegious hypocrites, in the beſt Churches there were diſſentions, variances, and Corruptions. The worſt that can be hence inferred is that no Church on earth is pure without mixture of droſſe, that wheat and tares grow together *untill the harveſt*. They that imagine a Church on earth without Scandalls in life, without corruption in diſcipline doe but fancy an *Vtopia*, an *Idea* of a Church in their braines, which neither is nor

nor ever will be *in rerum naturâ*. We have wherewith abundantly to justify our Religion and Church notwithstanding the accidents of Scandalls, in that they are condemned in our doctrine, punished in our governement, disclaimed by most, practised by few. But that they are necessary by reason of mens corruptions, and Satans working even where there is true religion, true Church, true Godlinesse, it's enough to answer them, that from the event of Scandals would argue, that our Religion is not true, or our Church false, or

our

our piety hypocriſy.

§. 13. *To magnify the providence of God.*

2 A better uſe of this point is to take occaſion to acknowledge & magnify the wiſe and gratious providence of God in ordering of Scandalls. That there ſhould be multitudes and multiplicities of Scandals in the world, that every where Satan ſhould, I ſay not lay, but ſow, and that thick too, ſnares and gins to catch the Saints by the heeles, that over and beſides the world, both good and bad ſhould caſt ſtumbling-blocks in our way, either wittingly or by imprudence, & withall naturall corruption be ſo apt to be buſy with them

them, and yet the Saints eſcape hell, get to heaven, ſometimes without any dangerous falls, ſometimes without any wounds, this is the admirable and gratious providence of God alone. It's a thouſand times more then to paſſe by the mouth of a hundred pieces of ordinance diſcharged againſt a man, and yet be unhurte, to break through the hoſt of Philiſtins with ſafety, to walk on high pinacles & not to fall downe headlong, to ſaile in the moſt rough and dangerous ſeas, to ſhoote the moſt perilous gulfs, and yet arrive in ſafety at the haven

ven. The *Pſalmiſt Pſal.* 107. extolles the immenſe goodneſſe of God in his preſervation of men from many dangers: but none of them all is equall to this of the delivery of his people from Scandalls; & therefore none deſerves greater thanks: on the other ſide, that the *Almighty* ſo orders it, that the obdurate ſinner is inſnared by Scandalls to his perdition, yet no injuſtice, no fault in God, this is the wonder of Gods providence, to be entertained by us with the Apoſtles exclamation. *O altitudo! O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdome*

dome and knowledge of God. Rom. 11.33.

§ 14. *3 To teach men to walk circumspectly.*

3 But then though it be the ever-vigilant providence of God, that preſerves the ſaints from ruine by Scandalls, and his juſt judgemẽt that leaves the wicked to his own perdition to be caught by them; yet this excludes not, but requires care in the Godly to take heed of them, and condemnes the impiety of the wicked in yeelding themſelves to ſtumble at thẽ. For it is the vitiouſneſſe of the one, that makes ſcandalls to be actually ſuch to him, & the holy wiſdome of the other, whereby God keeps him from

from being overthrown by them: wherefore it behoves them to learne to *walke circumſpectly, not as fooles but as wiſe. Ephe.*5.15. And to this end, 1. to get as much ſpirituall prudence as they can to diſcerne them, to be acquainted with their own hearts by frequent examination, by through-knowledge of their naturall corruption, to be well ſeen in the *wils and methods*, and artifices of *Satan*, whereby he ſeekes to deceive and devoure, to know the diſpoſitions of wicked men, and weakneſſe of good men whom Satan may work by. 2. To be ever

ever ſober, and watch-full, not laid a ſleep by any luſt of our hearts, any pride & ſelfe-confidence, or the like, as *David, Hezekiah, Peter, &c.* were, when they were ſcandalized. 3. That we ſtudy conſtantly in Gods law, and cleave to it with upright hearts, which is a ſure antidote againſt this poiſon of ſcandalls; *For great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing ſhall offend them. Pſal.* 119.165. 4 That as we have one eye ſtill to our way that we ſtũble not, ſo the other ſtill on God in fervent praier to him, who alone can, and will keep us when we

§.15. 4. To waite for Chriſts comming.

ſeek him.

4 Laſtly, ſith notwithſtanding all the vigilancy and warineſſe of a Chriſtian, ſcandals will be till the *ſonne of Man ſhall ſend forth his Angels, and they ſhall gather out of his Kingdome all things that offend, and them which doe iniquity. Mat.* 13.41. The righteous muſt learne with patience and longing deſire, to expect the comming of the ſon of man. *Even as the husband-man waiteth for the pretious fruit of the earth, ſo muſt they be patient unto the comming of the Lord. Iames* 5. 7. Till then there will be cauſe for them to be exerciſed, then

in humbling themſelves, and mourning for the diſhonour of God by ſcandalls; as *Lot vexed his righteous ſoule with hearing and ſeeing the deeds of the* Sodomites, & to poſſeſſe their ſoules in hope and aſſurance that Chriſt will come, and bind up Satan, & remove all ſcandalls, and perfect his Church, *that they may follow the Lambe whither ſoever he goeth.*

CAP. 2.

Of the woe belonging to Scandalizers in generall.

§. 1. *The explication of the words of the second proposition of the Text.*

HAving handled the first proposition concerning the necessity of Scandalls, the second followes concerning the woefull condition of Scandalizers, which is delivered elleiptically by S. *Luke*, οὐαὶ δι' οὗ ἔρχεται, by Saint *Matthew fully*, πλὴν οὐαὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκείνῳ δι' οὗ τὸ σκάνδαλον ἔρχεται, *Woe be to that man by whom the scandall cometh*, or is; for ἔρχεται, is as

as much as γένεται: which propoſition the particle πλὴν *nevertheleſſe*, ſhews to be added in manner of a *prolepſis*: For whereas it might be urged, if there be a neceſſity of offences, then they are no faults, nor puniſhable; our Saviour ſeems to deny this conſequence by telling us, that though they be neceſſary, yet they be voluntary in the ſcandalizers, who are therefore culpable, and puniſhable, *Woe unto him through whom they come.*

§ 2. *That a woe belongs to Scandalizers.*

Saint *Hierome* in his Commentary on *Matth.* 18. conceives that in this ſpeech our Saviour ſpecially pointed at *Judas*,

It is true that Christ doth pronounce a woe to *Iudas Mat.* 26. 24. But that these words in my Text should either aime at *Iudas* his particular fact, or be restrained to his scandalous action, agrees not with the words, which speak of woe or evill redundant to the *world by offences*: not one offence, and of scandalizing indefinitely *any of those litle ones that believe in him.* Wherefore the meaning is, *Woe*, that is misery or evill shall befall *him by whom the offence cometh*, who ever he be. And the conclusion that it affords is this, *That misery belongs*

to

to him that is the cauſe of ſcandalls, or as in S. *Mathew* in that paralel place *Mat.* 18. 7. *Woe ſhall be to that man by whom the offence commeth.*

§ 3.

To declare which truth we are diſtinctly to expreſſe. 1. What ſcandalizers this woe belongs to. 2. What the woe is which is pronoũced againſt thẽ. 3. Why it is that they incur this woe.

§. 4. *Who are Scandalizers, and to what Scandalizing woe belongs*

In anſwer to the firſt, we are to conſider, that that by which ſcandall comes is not a bare object, but a perſon, (*woe be to that man*, as it is in S. *Mathew*) and that as an agent in cauſing ſcandall.

2. That ſometimes a mã may be a ſcandalizer in overthrowing himſelfe. As is manifeſt by that ſpeech of our Saviour, *Mat.*18. 8. *If thy hand or thy foot ſcandalize, or offend thee, cut them off.* That is as Interpreters conceive, if thy luſt, or will cauſe thee to ſin, deny them. For mens own carnall reaſon, the luſts of their own hearts doe ofttimes cauſe them to fall, or to goe away. An inſtance is the example of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Pſ.*73.2. *Whoſe feet were almoſt gone, his foot-ſteps had wellnigh ſlipt. For he was envious at the fooliſh, whẽ he ſaw the proſperity of*

the

the wicked: His own underſtanding had in a ſort tripped up his heeles, or ſcandalized him. And this ſort of ſcandalizing may not unfitly be called internall or immanent, and is ſo far from being excluded here, that our Saviour by ſubjoyning to the words, *Mat.* 18.7. *Woe to that man by whom the offence commeth*, preſently in the 8. ver. *If thy hand ſcandalize thee cut it off*, (which is meant of this inward ſcandall) ſeemes to have plainely intended it: And therefore S. *Chryſoſtome* in his Homily on *Math.* 18.7 calls the ſcandals here κωλύματα τῆς ὁρθῆς ὁδοῦ, *all*

hinderances of the right way, whether from within or without. And indeed a Woe doth undoubtedly belong to all ſuch, as by their own vaine imagination, their own evill affections doe overthrow themſelves; when as S. *Iames* ſpeaks, a *man is drawn away of his own luſt and entiſed:* for as it followes, *then when luſt hath conceived it bringeth forth ſinne, and ſinne when it is finiſhed bringeth forth death.* Accordingly occaſion might be taken hence to conſider the waies of ſelfe-ſcandalizing, which are in a manner infinite, and to ſhew the woe conſe-

Iames 1. 14

ſequent to them, and to give directions to prevent this danger. But this is beſides my purpoſe in handling this text, and an immenſe taske: it muſt be to ſhew the deceites of every ſinne, its manner of working &c. and therefore letting this thing paſſe only with this admonition, that it behooves every Chriſtian to be jealous of his own heart, and to watch it narrowly, leſt it prove a *Iudas* to him, and how deare ſo ever his luſt, or imagination be to him, yet it muſt be cut off, that it ſcandalize him not, remembring the Counſell of our Saviour, *that it is better*

better without them to enter into heaven, then with them to be caſt into hell fire. 3. That ſometimes and that moſt commonly, ſcandalizing is a tranſeunt action, and he is ſaid to cauſe offence, that harmes another by his action, and this may be called *externall* or *tranſeunt ſcandall.* And this is undoubtedly here meant, for he ſpeaks here of ſcandalizing *one of theſe litle ones that believe in him*, and of ſuch ſcandall as whereby a woe comes to the world, that is to the ſocieties & rankes of men. And this ſort of Scandalizing is it which I intend to treat of

of. 4. That of this ſort of ſcandalizing diverſe definitions are given. There is this definition or deſcription in *Tertullian* his book *de velandis virginibus*, where he defines ſcandall, *Exemplum rei non bonæ ædificans ad delictum, an example of a thing not good building to ſin*: which deſcription though it doe not unfitly expreſſe what is the ſcandall which is by evill example, yet doth it not ſufficiently comprize all ſorts of ſcandalizing another, *v.g.* not the ſcandalizing by abuſe of our liberty in things indifferent, nor that which is by perſecution. That definition

finition which the ſchoole-men as *Aqu.* 2ª. 2ª. *q.*43. *art.*1. doe cõmõly follow taken from S. *Hierome* comment. in *Math.* 15. is more fit to comprize all ſorts of ſcandall to another. *Scandalum eſt dictum vel factum minùs rectum, præbens alteri occaſionem ruinæ*; that is, *Scandall is a ſaying or deed, leſſe or not right, occaſioning ruine to another.* This definition is good enough, ſaving that the terme of ruine being a metaphor (and accordiug to *Ariſtotles* rule in his Topicks παν̃ κτ̃ μεταφορὰν λεγόμενον ἀσαφὲς, All metaphors are obſcure) is unfit for a definition

nition till explained: wherefore it is needfull we ſhould ſhew more plainly what is meant by *ruine* in this definition. By ruine, or falling, is doubtleſſe meant here not corporall ruine or falling of the body, but ſpirituall ruine or the falling of the minde. Now this ſpirituall ruine is primarily underſtood of falling into ſinne, whether it be greater, as Apoſtacy from the faith, hereſy, infidelity, Idolatry or the like; or leſſer as by cauſing a ſlower progreſſe in Religion, unchearfulneſſe therein, impediment to any other duty a Chriſtian or an un-

unbeliever ſhould doe.

Qu. If any be asked whether any griefe or diſplicency of mind, or anger, which are the effects of Scandall, as is before ſhewed may be called *ruine* of another, according to this definition? whereto I anſwer:

Anſ. The griefe diſpli cency or anger that ariſeeth from another mans ſaying or deed, is ſometimes juſt and neceſſary, when the words or deeds be manifeſtly evill; ſuch was the griefe of the *Corinthians* for the ſcandall of the inceſtuous perſon; our Saviours indignation at the hardneſſe of the *Phariſees* hearts: ſuch was the griefe or vexation

on of righteous *Lot, in hearing and ſeeing the ungodly deeds of the Sodomites, Davids* griefe *becauſe men kept not Gods Law.* And this griefe is a neceſſary duty in them that mourne, but a ſinne and ſcandall in them that cauſe it. A *ruine* therefore it cannot be ſaid to be in the primary ſenſe, as ruine imports falling into ſin, but ruine it may be ſaid to be in a *ſecondary* ſenſe, as ruine imports any affliction of the ſoule; and with this explication the terme [*ruine*] may fitly enough expreſſe the effect of this ſcandall. Sometimes the ſorrow, diſplicencie, and anger that

that ariſeth in the perſon offended, from the ſayings and deeds of another are unjuſt, both in him that is offended, and in him that offends: this is when a man is grieved at the uſe of another mãs lawfull liberty in things indifferent by reaſon of his owne weakneſſe of faith, thinking that to be unlawfull which is not; as thoſe that were offended at their brethrens neglect of daies, and difference of meats, *Rom.* 14 which thing is unjuſt in him that is thus offended, and it is alſo unjuſt in him that offends, when without Charity to his brother he heeds not, as he

he ought, the avoiding of grieving his brother contrary minded. And this griefe may be called, ruine of the perſon offended, not only in the ſecondary ſenſe, but alſo in the *primary ſenſe*, occaſioning not only griefe, but alſo uncharitable judging, diſ-union, or diminution of affections, yea ſometimes further ſins. Sometimes the griefe is unjuſt in the perſon offended, but not in the perſon offending. As many were offended at our Saviours, and the Apoſtles preaching, which yet were their neceſſary duties; ſuch perſons were not only angred, but ſome

ſometimes forſook them and their fellowſhip, by reaſon of ſuch preaching, and ſo the preaching was a ſcandall to them, and a *ruine*, both in the *primary* and *ſecondary* ſenſe, but through their own default, and therefore unjuſtly on their part. With this explication I conceive the definition given to be ſufficient, and right enough. 5. That ſinnes of thought are not ſcandalls, unleſſe they break out into acts, whether of wordes or deeds. If ſmothered or ſtayed within they are ſinnes, but not ſcandals. 6 That then an offence is ſaid to come by a man, either

either when his intention is to harme his brother by his fact, as *Balaam* did *Revel.* 2. 14. or the nature and quality of the fact is apt to harme others, as in S. *Peters* advice, *Math.* 16. 23. In either of these two Cases it is *scandalum datum*, or *active scandall*, and the man that is the agent in such facts or words, is one *by whom the offence cõmeth.* But if a man doe his duty and men are scandalized, if the offence were neither intended by the agent of the fact, nor come from the nature of the action, but from the ill disposition of him that is offended, it is to be con-

conceived to be only *ex accidente, accidentally*, to him whose action did offend, and therefore it is in relation to him only *ſcandalum paſsivum, a paſsive ſcandall, non datum ſed acceptum, not given by him, but taken by the offended party*, who is thereby the ſcandalizer of himſelfe, or *he by whom the offence cometh*. Our Saviours diſcourſe concerning the eating of his fleſh, offended the *Capernaites Iohn 6. 60. 61.* But this was not by reaſon of Chriſts ſermon, which was of a neceſſary truth: but from their own perverſe ignorance. In like manner the *Phariſees*

riſees were offended at Chriſts doctrine concerning the cauſe of defilement. *Math.* 15. 12. but of this ſcandall not our Saviours doctrine, but their owne malice was the proper cauſe. The fact of the *Reubenites* offended the other tribes *Ioſh.* 22. 10. 11. 12. but this was through their own miſtake. Now the woe here denounced belongs not to thoſe through whoſe actions ſcandall comes by *accident*: but thoſe that give, or cauſe ſcandall, either in their *intention, or according to the nature, quality, or manner of their action.* So that, that to which

which this woe belongs, is not an object, but an agent, not only as scandalizing himselfe, but another, not by an action of the imagination, but of word or deed, bringing ruine to another, either in a primary or secondary sense, not by accident, but eyther by direct intention, or by reason of the nature, quality, or manner of the action.

In answer to the second *quære*. The particle οὐαὶ or woe is used in our Saviours sayings to signifie some grievous judgement or calamity, both temporall, as *Mat.* 23.29. the woe denounced to the *Pharisees* is expressed

preſſed *v.* 33. to bee the *damnation of hell.* And that this woe is here denounced to ſcandalizers appeares by the aggravation in the 2. verſe, where to *have a milſtone hanged about his necke, and to be caſt into the ſea*, is made leſſe than the woe here denounced to the ſcandalizer, and *Mat.* 18.7. when our Saviour had ſaid, *Woe to the man by whom the offece commeth*, he addes immediatly *v.*8. *that the hand offending ſhould be cut off*, that the ſcandalizer by retaining his two hands, *be not caſt into hell fire.* Hell fire or the damnation of hell is the chiefe and greateſt

woe due to the ſcandalizer. But beſides it there's a woe alſo of temporall death awarded ſometimes to ſcandalizers. For this reaſon was *Balaam* the ſonne of *Peor* ſlaine with the ſword *Num.* 31. 8. that God might be avenged of him for his practiſe *in teaching Balaak to lay a ſtumbling block before the children of Iſrael. Elies* ſons ſinned greatly in their ſcandalous facts: *for men abhorred the offering of the Lord,* 1. *Sam.* 2. 17. The iſſue was, they were both ſlaine by the *Philiſtins* in one day. Likewiſe other temporall woes on their ſoules, bodies, names,

names, estates, posterity, &c. are inflicted by God on scandalizers. Thus was *David* filled with trouble of soule for his sin in the matter of *Vriah*, *by which he caused the enemies of the Lord to blaspheame*, so that hee was faine to beg hard for restitution of joy & comfort, *Psal.* 51.8.12. And the incestuous *Corinthian* was so plunged over head and eares in sorrow that hee was almost drown'd with it. 2. *Cor.* 2.7. hee was cast out of the Church, delivered over to *Satan*. *David* for the fore-named sin was haunted with griefes in his children almost to

his dying day, and it ſtil lies as a blot upon his name. The Prieſts that make others ſtumble at the Law, and threatned with contemptibleneſſe, *Malac.* 2.8.9. No active ſcandall ſcapes ſcot-free, there's none veniall, every one hath it's meaſure of woe; yet not all alike. For ſome of theſe ſcandalls are more heinous then others, and therefore incurre a greater woe. As for inſtance, ſome ſcandalls conſiſt in facts in their kind evill, and theſe are worſe than other ſcandalls which ariſe onely from the abuſe of our liberty, in things lawfull. The ſcandall of *Elies* ſons

ſonnes in reſpect of the foule nature of their facts was worſe then than the ſcandall of the ſtrong in faith by the eating of meats with offence, mentioned. *Rom.* 14.2. Some ſcandalls are worſe than other, *ratione cauſæ*, in reſpect of the cauſe from whence they ariſe. As ſcandalls from malice, and ſubdolous intents are worſe than thoſe that ariſe from ignorance and imprudence; *Balaams* ſcandall by deviſing and counſelling *Balak* how to intrap the *Iſraelites* was worſe than *Peters* adviſing of Chriſt to deſiſt from his purpoſe of going to *Hieruſalem* to ſuf-

fer. 3. Some ſcandalls are worſe then others in regard of the eminency of the perſon offending; becauſe they bring a greater ſtaine to the profeſſion, and become a greater danger to men, apt to ſtumble: Thus *Davids* ſinne in the matter of *Vriah* the *Hittite* was greater then the ſinne of the adultereſſe mentioned *Io.* 8. The ſcandalous fact of a Clergy-man worſe then of the people, of a Magiſtrate than a ſubject, of a noble perſon than one of the Commons. *Vbi ſublimior prærogativa ibi major culpa.* Saith *Salvian*, *where the dignity is higher, the fault is the greater.*

Lib. 4. de gubernat. Dei.

4.

4. In reſpect of the iſſue and event of the ſcandall, ſome ſcandals are worſe than others, as when the event with a litle heed might have bin foreſeen, when the iſſue is not only the alienation or grieving of another, but alſo Apoſtaſy of ſome, hardening of others, occaſioning others to blaſpheame the name of God, to inveigh againſt the truth, Goſpell, Religion, &c. Thus the inceſtuous *Corinthians* fact was worſe than the fact of thoſe that eat with offence to their brethren things offered to the *Idols*. 5. In reſpect of the number and quality of perſons ſcandaliz'd,

the ſcandals of ſome are worſe then of others. For it is worſe to ſcandalize many than few, weake Chriſtians than ſtronger &c. So that theſe and ſuch like Conſiderations vary much the degree of the ſinne of ſcandalizing, and conſequently of the woe due it. Yet ſo that none, but hath it's woe allotted to it.

§ 6 *Why a woe belongs to them.*

In anſwer to the third queſtion. The reaſons of this woe awarded to ſcandalizers are taken 1. from the nature of the ſinne. For all ſcandalizing though but by abuſe of our liberty in things indifferent is againſt charity, as the Apoſtle teacheth.

eth *Rom.* 14. 15. For true charity ſhould move us to ſerve, and helpe, and ſuſtaine one another, *Gal.* 5. 13. not to harme deject and grieve one another. Now the law of charity is a fundamentall law, *the law of Chriſt*, *Gal.* 6. 2. and therefore in this reſpect ſcandalizing is a ſinne againſt our brother, and againſt Chriſt, 1. *Cor.* 8. 12. Wherefore according to the rules of equity he that regards not to ſhew love to others, deſerves to be deprived of favour and love himſelfe; there being no rule more equall than that of our Saviour, *Mat.* 7. 2. *With what meaſure yee meet it*

ſhall be meaſured to you againe. But when the ſcandalizing is not by ignorance, but wittingly and willingly, then it is much more againſt charity, and therefore juſtly deſerves a greater woe. As when men ſcandalize of ſet purpoſe either as the *Phariſees* that under pretence of long prayers and faſting *devoure widdows* houſes, by their ſhew of devotion gayned Proſelytes, *and made them twofold more the children of hell than themſelves. Mat.* 23.14.15. or as our Saviour ſayes *of falſe Prophets that put on ſheeps cloathing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. Mat.* 7.

15.

15. *or Foxes in the deſerts.* Ezek. 13. 4. *They ſhall receive the greater damnation,* in that not only virtually, but formally, not only *privatively*, but alſo *poſitively* they ſinne againſt charity. Adde hereunto that if the ſcandalous fact be ſuch an act as is in it's nature an enormous ſinne, which though it were done never ſo ſecretly, yet it would highly provoke God: then it is to ſpeake with the Apoſtle καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλὸς excelſively ſinfull, in that it is both a grievous tranſgreſſion, and a grievous ſcandall, and conſequently compound iniquity. In which Rom. 7. 13.

reſpect

respect the sin of *Hophni* and *Phinehas* in their violent profanations, & their outragious abusing of women even before the Tabernacle of the congregation, *was very great before the Lord, for men abhorred the offering of the Lord.* 1. *Sam.* 2. 17. And *Davids* deed in defileing *Bathsheba*, and murdering her husband was exceeding greivous, *in that he gave occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheame.* 2. *Sam.* 12. 14.

§. 7. 2. From the effects of it. The immediate and principall effect of scandalls is the harme of our brothers soule, by wounding their conscience, as the Apostle

Apoſtle ſpeaks 1. *Cor.* 8. 12. and *quantum ad ſcandalizantem*, as much as pertaines to the ſcandalizer the deſtruction of him, *for whom Chriſt dyed*, as the ſame Apoſtle ſpeaks. 1. *Cor.* 8. 11. *Rom.* 14. 15. I ſay not that every ſoule that is ſcandalized doth eventually periſh, nor doe I meddle with the diſpute concerning Chriſts intention in dying for them that periſh: But this I ſay that he that ſcandalizeth a ſoule, for wch, for ought he knowes Chriſt dyed, and for which hee is to conceive Chriſt died, and thereby moves him to turne into the way of perdition,

perdition, doeth for ſo much as concerns his action, cauſe *his brother to periſh for whom Chriſt died*, although hee neither in the event periſh not, nor Chriſt in his intention offered up himſelfe as a ſacrifice to his father to appeaſe his wrath for him. For it is meerely *ex accidenti* by accident to the ſcandalizers action, that either his brother periſhed not, or Chriſt died not for him. Even as he that malicioufly intending to wound *Iaſon*, *Pharæus* did by accident cure him of an Apoſtem, his fortune was admirable, but his malice nothing leſſe in his wound

by

by that accident. Surely every man ought to bee tender of his brothers ſoule that it periſh not by his action. And if notwithſtanding his ſcandalous fact yet hee periſh not, this cõmends Gods goodneſſe, but leſſens not his naughtineſſe. Every man ought to bee tender of the ſoule of his brother, as if he were certain Chriſt died for him, when in appearance to him Chriſt died for him, and hee that is not ſo, is injurious to Chriſt, whether Chriſt intended to dye for the perſon ſcandalized or no: Even as he that does a thing lawfull, which his owne conſcience

ence judgeth unlawfull, ſinnes damnably, as if the thing were in it ſelfe unlawfull *Rom.* 14.23. Now doeth not he that cares not to deſtroy anothers ſoule deſerve to have his owne ſoule loſt? ſhould his ſoule bee regarded by God, that makes no account of his brothers? If a *Cain* or *Iudas* betray or deſtroy anothers life, who is aggrieved that they looſe theirs? If a monſtrous *Caligula* be ſo minded that he hee care not though all mens heads were off ſo that his might ſtay on, who can except againſt God for letting vengeance looſe upon him? Adde hereunto that beſides

beſides the principall and immediate effect of ſcandals many other evills by breach of charity, contentions, ſchiſmes &c. follow upon them, which as they bring woe to the world, ſo doth the woe brought on others juſtly rebound on the head of him that caſts it.

§ 8. *Application 1. to manifeſt the danger of ſcandalizers.*

For application of this truth. 1. That which hath been ſaid manifeſts unto us both the ſinfulneſſe and the danger of thoſe that heed not their wayes to avoyde ſcandalizing of others, that watch not over their words or actions leaſt they cauſe others to ſtumble. It is not to bee denied

denied but that there are ſome who through over-fearfullneſſe of giving ſcandall, doe omit things fit for them to doe, which ariſeth through want of knowing in what caſes ſcandall is to bee feared, in what not, out of imprudence in not diſcerning the difference of perſons. This errour is the more pardonable in that it likely comes not out of an evil diſpoſition, but out of a tender conſcience, joyned with a weak underſtanding. Nor likely doth it procure other hurt than the leſſening of the eſteem of the perſon ſcrupulous, & the expoſing him to contempt

tempt and deriſion, in ſome, to pitty in others; excepting when ſuch ſcrupuloſity cauſeth diſobedience to the neceſſary commands of governours, or breeds ſuperſtition, or the like evils. Yet this is an evill in that it is an errror, and ſomewhat intrencheth on Gods prerogative, in making that to bee ſin, which he hath not made ſin: and therefore is to bee ſhunned, not to be cheriſhed. But ſuch likely are but few. The moſt of people mind and proſecute their pleaſure, profit, credit, preferment, content, &c. but litle or nothing regard what ſcandall followes thereon,

thereon, many are of that impetuous reſolutiõ that they will have their ſports not unlawfull in themſelves, though they will certainly occaſion drunkenneſſe, quarrelling, blood-ſhed, idlenes, undoing of families, and ſuch like evils. So that in a ſort they reſolve like unto that *Pope*, who ſaid that hee would have his diſh of meat in ſpight of God, ſo theſe are bent to have their ſports in ſpight of their brethren; yea and of God too, that commands them not to offend their brethren. And as men are affected to their pleaſure, ſo they are to their profits, preferments,

ments, credit, ends, yea their vaine cuſtomes. So violent is the ſtreame of their wills, that they will have their courſe, although they not only overthrow many lives, and ſtates, but alſo drowne many ſoules in perdition. Too too many are of *Cains* mind, who when he was demanded of God, where his brother was anſwered angerly *Gen. 4. 9. Am I my brothers keeper?* They care not whether they ſinke or ſwimme, their conſciences be whole or wounded, they ſtumble or goe upright, they periſh or be ſaved, would it could be truely ſaid that there were

were no miniſters of the Goſpell, no Magiſtrates, no Parents, no maſters, that by their courſes ſhew that they make light account of the ſtumbling of mens ſoules, ſo they may have their will? ſurely there ſhould bee (if there were any ſparke of true charity in men) a zeale to the good of their brethrens ſoules, and accordingly *of ſome to have compaſſion, putting a difference, and others to ſave with feare, pulling them out of the fire: hating even the garment ſpotted by the fleſh, that it may not infect others. Iude 22. 23. Knowing that hee which converts a ſinner from the*

errour

errour of his way ſhall ſave a ſoule from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſinnes. Iames 5. 20. But alas: ſo great is the vitious ſelfe-love of men that for their owne pleaſures, profit, preferment, vaine glory, and ſuch like ends, they draw innumerable ſoules into hell with them, ſometimes by perverting their faith, ſometimes by corrupting their devotions, ſometimes by vitiating their manners, and yet as if they were all *Popes* no man muſt ſay unto them what doeſt thou? To omit other inſtances of leſſe account. To maintaine the great Idoll of latter ages the *Pa-*

pall

pall Monarchy. What groſſe ſuperſtitions have been maintained, what practiſes have been deviſed, and uſed to the ſeducing of whole nations of people, holding them in blindneſſe and ſuperſtition to their perdition, yea to the reproach of the religion of Chriſt even by Iewes, Turks, and Infidels; it were infinite to relate. How careleſſe many others are to ſcandalize milions of ſoules that they may attaine to, or maintain ſecular greatneſſe, I forbeare to ſpeak it being too manifeſt to the world. All which diſpoſitions and practiſes, how damnable they be,

oh

oh that men would conſider, that they may prevent the woe here denounced by our Saviour, and take heed how they ſlight their brothers ſpirit, leſt they draw downe eternall vengeance on themſelves from the Father of ſpirits, and by valuing at ſo low a rate their brothers ſoule, make the market cheap for their owne.

§. 9. *2 To admoniſh them of their ſin.*

Wherefore in the ſecond place we are to be admoniſhed, that as we are to look to our feet that we ſtumble not our ſelves, ſo to take heed to our actions that they overthrow not others. The Almighty hath for-

bidden in his law to *curse the deafe, and to put a ſtumbling block before the blind. Levit.* 19. 14. it being an unworthy, and injurious thing to take advantage from weakneſſe, to hurt thoſe whom humanity, & reaſon ſhould cauſe us to helpe. But it is a thouſand times more injurious and cruell, to lay a ſtumbling block before mens ſoules, in as much as the danger of a ſoules falling is incomparably greater then the ruine of the body. Surely he that hath any eſtimation of the precioufnes of a ſoule, any love to it, any compaſſion, any ſenſe of the evill of a ſoules perdition

tion, ought to be moſt tender of doing it any hurt, ready to doe it any good. Wherefore it concernes us to be watchfull over our words and actions appearing to men, that they become not Scandalls. We are to look heedily to our thoughts, that we be not found hypocrites before God, and to every action we doe that we may keep our peace with God: But for a farther reaſon we are to look to thoſe that are in the view of the world, as it were on the ſtage. We are to be carefull of our privy thoughts, as knowing that God ſees us; and hates all uncleanneſſe, in

the inward parts. But of our open actions we are to be carefull for a double reason, because God sees them, and men too; so that we may not only grieve Gods spirit, but also hurt mens soules, if they be not right. For as there be likely some who as *Ieremiah* speaks of himselfe, *Ierem.* 20.20. *will waite for our halting if in any thing we stumble*, that they may reproach us: so there are others, whom we shall probably make to halt to their ruine, if we cast any stumbling block before them. Besides we may safely conceive, that they are careless of their own soules

ſoules, that are not carefull to prevent the ſcandall of other mens ſoules: and that *in foveam incident, quam foderint*, they ſhall by divine juſtice *fall into the pit themſelves, who have digged it for others.*

§ 10. *Directions to avoide it.*

Wherefore that we may not ſcandalize others, let us learne, 1. To feare God as we are commanded *Levit.* 19. 14. *Thou ſhalt not put a ſtumbling block before the blind, but ſhalt feare thy God: I am the Lord.* For he that feares God will not put a ſtumbling block before his brother, ſith he is ſure thereby to incurre woe, and diſpleaſure of God.

Scandalizing conſiſts not with Gods feare. 2. To love our brethren, with which Scandalizing conſiſts not. For how can he be ſaid to love his brother, who ſpreads a net for his feet: eſpecially when he inſnares his ſoule? And this is ſure, that he *which loves not his brother loves not God but walkes in darkneſſe.* 1. *Iohn.* 2.10.11.

3. To get uprightneſſe of heart, that thou maiſt walk uprightly, and this will prevent both ſtumbling in thy ſelfe, and ſcandalizing of others. For he that is not right-hearted, though he may in ſome things for a time doe

doe well, as *Iehu* did, yet ſooner or later he will ſtumble or fall. Even as a lame horſe while he is heated will goe well enough, but when he cooles will halt downeright: Even ſo an hypocrite though for a time he may goe on fairely in his way; yet in the Concluſion likely, when he hath attained his ends, he falls foulely. As *Iehu* that ſeemed to be zealous for the Lord, untill he had gotten the kingdome of *Iſrael*, but in the end ſhewed his hypocriſy by ſerving *Ieroboams* golden Calves. Now ſuch a one will ſurely become a ſtumbling block and that

a permanent one. Wherefore as it is neceſſary for our appearing before God with boldneſſe, that we get upright hearts, ſo likewiſe for our living unblameably, and inoffenſively to our neighbours.

4 Laſtly to get wiſdome and prudence to conſider the diſpoſitions of men, who are apt to be ſcandalized, and the due circumſtances and conſequences of our actions, that they may be none occaſion offence. In all our dealings that are obvious to men we muſt ſhew our ſelves innocent as *Doves, wiſe as Serpents, in malice chil-*

children, in underſtanding men.

Cap. 3.

Of Scandalizing in ſpeciall by ſinfull Example.

§ 1. *Scandalizing diſtributed into foure waies*

HOW grievous an evill active ſcandalizing is in the generall hath bin declared. But becauſe things that are more confuſe in the *Genus*, appeare more diſtinct in the *ſpecies*, my purpoſe is to conſider the ſeverall brãches of active ſcandalizing, that we may the better diſcerne the ſinne and danger of ſcandalizing. Active ſcandalizing

is two waies; one, when a man in his actions, intending only to have his own will or luſt, regards not the ruine of another by his action, & this may be called *Exemplary ſcandalizing, or Scandall by example*, and of this kind of Scandall there are two ſorts. The firſt is when the example is in a thing in its nature evill, and this may not unfitly be called *ſcandall by ſinfull example*. The ſecond is when the Scandall is in a thing lawfull otherwiſe, as being in its nature indifferent, but by want of Charity abuſed ſo, as that harme comes to another, and this may be called

called ſcandalizing, *in the abuſe of things indifferent.* The other way of ſcandalizing is when an action is done for this particular intent, that other mens ſoules may be harmed, chiefly in drawing them to ſinne. And this may be called *Scandalizing by deviſed practiſe:* which likewiſe is of two ſorts: one when by inticeing means, as by coũſells, perſwaſions, placing objects before men, and the like, men are overthrowne; and this may be called, *ſcandall by enticing practiſes.* The other when by terrifying wayes men are ſcandalized, and this may be called, *ſcandall by per-*

perſecution. According to this diſtribution in this method I ſhall ſpeake. 1. Of ſcandalizing by evill example. 2. Of ſcandalizing by abuſe of our liberty in things indifferẽt. 3. Of ſcandalizing by enticing practiſes, 4. of ſcandalizing by perſecution.

§ 2. *A woe belongs to them that ſcandalize by ſinfull example.*

That ſinfull example begets ſcandall needs not proofe; Experience of all times proves it too abundantly. And that poſition of *Solomon* is plaine, *Prov.* 29. 6. *In the tranſgreſſion of an evill man there is a ſnare, or ſcandall*. For theſe two words are equivalent, as was declared before. *A ſnare* whereby to inſnare himſelfe and to harme

harme others. Whereupon it is that *Solomon* adviſeth *Prov.* 22.25. *that we ſhould make no friendſhip with an angry man nor goe with a furious man, leſt we learne his wayes, and get a ſnare to our ſoule.* So that the evill example of angry and furious men becomes a ſnare or ſcandall to mens ſoules, who goe with them. Wherefore we may ſafely apply the woe of my text to this ſcandalizing, and conclude. *That miſery belongs to thoſe that ſcandalize others by ſinfull example. The wages of ſinne* indefinitely *is death Rom.* 6. 23. even that death which is oppoſite to eternall life of

to wit eternall death of body & ſoule in hell fire. Which is much more due when it is not onely a ſin but alſo a ſinfull example, & a ſcandal by ſinfull example. But beſides this eternall woe, that temporal woe belongs to it alſo, the ſtory of the miſery of *Hophni* and *Phinehas*, of *David* & others for their ſcandalls by ſinfull example doth plentifully ſhew.

§ 3. *What actions of ſinfull example doe ſcädalize.*

To explaine this point more fully we are to conſider, 1. what actions of ſinful exãple doe ſcandalize. 2. How they doe ſcandalize. 3. why a woe belongs to ſuch. To give anſwer to the firſt quære, I ſay. That in this ſort of ſcandalizing

zing, the action ſcandalizing is that which is of it ſelfe ſinfull, that is ſuch as is prohibited by God to be done. For this is the difference betweene this and the next ſort of ſcandalizing, that this ſort of ſcandalizing would bee ſinfull in Gods ſight, though no man were offended by it, and therefore when it becomes a ſcandall it is a double ſin, 1. As it is ſuch a kind of act as is forbidden by God. 2. As it occaſions the ruine of another, as *Davids* murther had been a ſin if never knowne, but ſcandalizng others, it became a double iniquity. The next ſort of ſcãdalizing is in an action

action not evill of it ſelfe, but by reaſon of ſcandall, ſo that were it no ſcandall it would bee no ſin, as the ſin of the ſtrong in faith mentioned *Rom.* 14. in eating indifferently any ſort of meat had beene no ſin, the thing being in it ſelfe indifferent, had not the weake in faith been thereby offended. 2. It is requiſite that the action ſcandalizing bee knowne. For privy actions doe not ſcandalize. Actions doe ſcandalize *tanquam objectum à quo, as an outward motive*, that provokes the mind; now ſuch provocation cannot be but by the knowledge of it; I meane knowledge of the act, though

though perhaps the perſon ſcandalized know not the ſinfulneſſe of it, but rather the ignorance of the ſinfulneſſe of it, may be the cauſe that it doth inſnare him. Perhaps it may be asked whether the living may be ſcandalized by the actions of them that are dead? I anſwere, yes doubtleſſe, though they were dead many ages before. *Solomons* ſin in hearkning to his wives, and furthering their Idolatry, became a ſcandall to the ſucceeding Kings of *Iudah*; and *Ieroboams* ſetting up the golden calves, was the ſcandall of the Kings of *Iſrael* that followed him in many

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many generations. As the remembrance of the vertues of anceſtours, may provoke poſterity to doe worthily, and thereby their memory be bleſſed as it is, *Prov.* 10.7. ſo the remembrance of the cruelty, tyranny, and ſuch like vices of *Anceſtours* doth oft times revive their ſinnes in their children, & cauſe their names to rot, and to ſtinke above ground, when their bodies are low enough in the ground. As the valour of *Miltiades* at *Marathon* ſtories report, provoked *Themiſtocles* to doe great exploits, and the relation of *Achilles* his proweſſe inflamed the mind

mind of *Alexander* the Great, ſo the memoriall of *Sylla* taught *Cæſar* to oppreſſe his countrey. For which reaſon it concernes all that deſire to doe good to thoſe that come after them, to leave a good name behind thē, leaſt the eyill ſavour of their bad example infect the world in many generations. Poſſibly it may be yet farther asked, whether ſinfull omiſſions of things wee ſhould doe, may become ſcandalls? I anſwere, yes; Experience ſhewes that the remiſſenes of great Schollers in duties of Godlineſſe, is often the cauſe of Coldneſſe & Lukewarmeneſſe in

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in religion in others that leane much on their example: the negligence of governours in frequenting Gods service, causeth many times the subjects to think there's no necessity of Constancy and diligence therein. So that he that would not scandalize his brother, must not only be free from open sins of Commission, but also from sinnes of omission.

§. 4. *How they doe scandalize.*

For answer to the second *quære* I say, that scandalizing by evill example doth harme the minds of others unto their ruine many waies. 1. Because it provokes men to the imitation of that

that particular ſinne in which the ſcandall is, whereby their ſoules are harmed. Thus S. Peter by not communicating with the Gentiles, drew *Barnabas* in like manner to Iudaïze with him. *Gal.* 2. 13. The example of an eminent perſon is never ſingle, if ſuch a one doe evill he carries with him others, as the ſtream doth that which floats upon it. *Iter efficax per exempla*, ſaith *Seneca*, the moſt prevalent way of drawing men is by examples, by which men are guided more than by Lawes or reaſons. In evill things examples are moſt forcible, ſith they agree with our

our naturall luſts: men need not to be urged to them, *they learne them of thẽſelves at the firſt ſight, ut vident, pereunt.* 2. The ſinfull example of men becomes a ſcandall to others, it that it hardens them in the ſins they have committed. For the deceitfulneſſe of ſin, ſo infatuats mens hearts as that they are ready to imagine the ſinne of another man to be a good excuſe or plea for their owne. As it is ſaid by the Prophet *Ezek.* 16. 51. *That Iudah had by her abominations juſtified Samaria in all her ſinnes.* Not as if the ſinne of one man could be in truth a ſufficient plea to ac-

acquit another that commits the ſame ſinne. But it is ſo κατ' ἄνθρωπον, *in the opinion of men*, who doe alleage nothing more commõly for defence of their facts, and conſequently for hardning them in their evills, then this that others have their faults, all are ſinners: *good men have bin overtaken with the ſame ſins, eminent men in profeſſion of religion have done as themſelves, and therefore they hope they have done no great hurt*, there's no ſuch cauſe of others reproving them, or that their own conſciences ſhould be much troubled. 3. There is another way of ſcandalizing which

which comes by evil practiſes, in that it makes men to ſtumble and fall one upon another, by jarres, variance fightings. What was it which ſet the *Benjamites*, and the other tribes in ſuch a combuſtion, but the horrible ſin committed on the Levites Concubine. *Iudg.* 21. 12. The treacherous murder of the Sechemites by *Simeon* & *Levi* made *Iacob to ſtink among the inhabitants of the land*, aud to combine againſt him. *Gen.* 34. 30. ſo true is that of S. *Iames* that *warres and fightings come from mens luſts that warre in their members*, and ſet men one againſt another

Iames

Iames 4. 1. 4. Beſides ſinfull examples create griefe to the good, and thereby ſcandalize them. To this purpoſe ſpeaks David *Pſal.* 119. 158. *I beheld the tranſgreſſors, and was grieved, becauſe they kept not thy word.* And S. *Paul* feared that when he came to the Corinthians God would humble him, and that he ſhould *bewaile the uncleanneſſe wherein they had ſinned.* 2. *Cor.* 12. 21. *Righteous Lot, dwelling among the Sodomites, in ſeeing and hearing vexed his righteous ſoule from day to day with their unlawfull deeds.* 2. *Pet.* 2. 8. As by ſtumbling ſome-

times there's fraction of a member, alwaies anguiſh, ſo by ſcandals ſometimes there's perverting of men from the right way, alwaies dolor and paine even in the beſt and ſoundeſt. 5. Adde hereunto that ſinfull examples doe moſt grievouſly ſcandalize, in that they cauſe men ill affected to blaſpheme God, to reproach his waies, religion, ſervice. Through the ſins of the Iewes *the name of God was blaſphemed among the Gentiles. Rom.* 2. 24. *David* by his foule crime in the matter of *Bathſheba, had given occaſion to the enimies of the Lord to blaſpheme.* 2. *Sam.* 12. 14.

It

It is a frequent thing for evill men to ſet their tongues againſt heaven, againſt God, his word, true religion, *as if they were none of them good,* when any that ſeemed to follow thē fall into groſſe tranſgreſſions. Wherein however they fooliſhly impute that to God, which he condemnes and puniſheth, and charge religion & godlineſſe with that which is the fruit of mens corrupt luſts, contrary to Godlineſſe: yet it ſerves Satan as an engine to ſtirre up mens enmity againſt God & his waies, and an occaſion for evill men to vent their venemous hatred of Gods

Lib.4.de guber. Dei.

word, his people and religion. *Salvian* at large relates how frequent in his daies, ſuch ſpeeches as theſe were in the mouths of *Pagans*, when they beheld the evill lives of Chriſtians; *Chriſtians would ſurely doe holy things if Chriſt had taught them holineſſe, look into the lives of Chriſtians and you may know what is Chriſts doctrine.* In like manner by reaſon of the lewdneſſe of *Gnoſticks*, *Nicolaitanes* and ſuch like damnable teachers. Chriſtian religion was much reproached by the heathen, and as S. *Peter* foretold 2. *Pet.* 2. 2. The way of truth blaſpheamed.

And

And ſo it is ſtill the vitiouſneſſe of a Proteſtant in his life opēs the mouth of a Papiſt, to diffame the reformed Religion, and the falling of any that ſeemed to be zealous of Gods word, cauſeth the impure mouthes of licentious perſons, to ſpeak evill of the *truth which is according to godlineſſe.* 6. Laſtly the ſinfull examples of men that have the name of Gods people doe ſcandalize, in making men to loath and to be averſe from Gods ſervice, and the way of his feare. The ſinne of *Hophni* and *Phinehas* cauſed men to *abhorre the offerings of the Lord.* 1. *Sam.* 2. 17. 24.

The Cruelty and coveteouſneſſe of the Spaniards in the weſt Indies, cauſed the miſerable *Americanes* to abhorre Chriſtian religion. As a holy life in the profeſſors is a great attractive, & inducement to draw mens hearts to the love of it; ſo an ungodly and unrighteous converſation is a certaine impediment and diſſwaſive from it. Partly becauſe as *Seneca* ſaith *plus oculis quam auribus credunt, men are guided by their eyes more then their eares*, partly becauſe good religion and vertue of men that doe evill things is taken to be, either *nonens* or *nullius pretii*, either

ther nothing or of no worth, even as a pearle or gold covered with dirt is paſſed by as if it were not, or of no value.

§. 3. *Why a woe belongs to ſuch.*

For the third *quære.* The reaſon why ſuch woe as hath been ſaid belongs to this ſcandalizing by ſinfull example is.

1 Becauſe in every ſcandall by ſinfull example there is a double iniquity, one in that it is againſt the precept of *cleaveing onely to that which is good. Rom.* 12. 9. an other in that it is againſt the precept of good example, in which wee are enjoyned *that*

our light ſhould ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee our good workes and glorify our Father which is in heaven Mat. 5. verſ. 16. 2. Becauſe it produceth two great evills, one in that thereby the name of God is diſhonoured, & ſo is againſt the love that is due to God, the other in that it becomes the ruine of his brother, and ſo is againſt the love that is due to him. Yet for as much as all ſinfull example is not alike grievous, but ſome ſinfull examples croſſe the precept of love to God more, ſome leſſe, ſome diſhonour God more, ſome leſſe, nor alike ſcan-

ſcandall, ſome being more againſt the love we owe to men, ſome leſſe, ſome harming them more, ſome leſſe; therefore the ſame degree of miſery is not awarded to all ſcandalizers by ſinfull example. There are ſome that by a continued evill practiſe doe ſcandalize others, who are accuſtomed to doe evill, as if it were their occupation, others that ſcandalize by a foule ſinne, but into which they were brought by infirmity, as *Noah* when he was overtaken with drũkenneſſe. Whoſe woe is doubtleſſe leſſe then the formers. Some there be that ſcandalize by totall

and finall Apoſtaſy; others by a grievous fall, but ſo as they recover by repentance, as S. *Peter*, and their woe is leſſe. Some break out into ſinfull example after warning given them to take heed of it: others becauſe they wanted a *Monitour* to warne them, and their woe is leſſe. Some there be, whoſe ſcandalls by reaſon of their eminency of place, gifts, or profeſſion are more notorious, and more heinous, others whoſe evill exãple reacheth not farre, and their woe is leſſe. Some that overthrow many by their evill example, ſome but few, & their woe is leſſe.

Some

Some that overthrow by their evill example their own children, their own naturall brethren, their own flocks of whom they ought to be moſt tender; others overthrow ſtrangers only, and their woe is leſſe. Thus by variety of circumſtāces the ſcandalls of ſome may bee worſe then others, and their woe greater; however there be a woe allotted to every one that ſcādalizeth by ſinfull example.

§. 6. *Application 1. to move them to mourne that ſcandalize by ſinfull example.*

For application of this truth. 1. Hence men are to bee advertiſed, what reaſon there is, they ſhould bewaile, & mourn for ſuch ſcandalls as they have

have caused by sinfull example. The greatnesse of the sinne, and the greatnesse of the danger, should both cause this humiliation. If S. *Paul* saw cause to mourne, & to be humbled for the uncleannesse, fornication, and lasciviousnesse of the Corinthians; how much more cause had the Corinthians to mourne for themselves! Every one that tenders Gods honour, & his own peace, is to shew his hatred of sinne by mourning for the abominations he sees acted by others: such are marked and observed by God, *Ezek.* 9.4. Greater cause there is that the Actors them-

themſelves ſhould mourn who have harmed others, and deſtroyed themſelves *ſuo gladio*, *by their own ſword*. Tis true there are no ſmall number of men, that make a ſport of ſinne, that rejoyce to doe evill, and that *they cauſe ſome to fall*. It were fitter for them to learne S. *Iames* his leſſon Ch. 5. 1. *to weep and howle for their miſeries that ſhall come upon them*: For as all ſinnes are miſchievous, ſo doubtleſſe ſcandalls by evill example, will be very miſchievous to the layers of them. You then that by your evill example, have made others diſſolute, debaucht, quarrelſome, braw-

brawlers, fighters, murderers, laſcivious, prodigall gameſters, drunkards, lyers, common prophaners of Gods holy name and time, deriders of Gods word, holy ſervices, & ſervants, idle, undutifull to ſuperiors, froward, factious, cõtentious, deceitfull, injurious, ſuperſtitious &c. oh goe & bewaile theſe ſins as a double evill diſhonouring God, & deſtroying men, overthrowing them, and bringing woe on your ſelves, and therefore requiring double & treble mourning for ſuch miſchiefes.

§. 7. *2. To move men to take heed of ſcandalizeing by fizfall example.*

2. It concernes likewiſe all perſons for the ſame

ſame reaſons, to take heed of giving evill example, to the ſcandall of others, ſpecially of thoſe that ſhould be neare and deare to them. It much imports every Chriſtian for the comfort of his owne ſoule, the glory of God, the good of others, to *have his converſation honeſt among men, that they which ſpeak againſt him as an evill doer, may by his good works which they ſhall behold, glorify God in the day of their viſitation.* 1. *Pet.* 2. 12. It is exacted even of women the weaker ſexe, that their converſation ſhould be ſuch in their ſubjectiō to their husbands, that their lives ſhould

ſhould have the effect of a Sermon to win others to godlines 1. *Pet.* 3. 1. 2. The reaping of ſuch fruite by well doeing ſhould be a great motive to make Chriſtians abundant in good works, much more ſhould the certainty of eternall life, aſſured to thoſe *that patiently continue in well doing. Rom.* 2. 7. provoke them to love, and to good works. However humane commiſeration ſhould move us to take heed of deſtroying our brethren by our evill life. Should it not bee a griefe to thee to deſtroy him whō thou art bound to help? Can a man take delight to damne his Child

Child, his friend to enjoy his luſt? Should it not be a joy to a man to lead others towards heaven, to keep them from hell? Oh what a bleſſed condition would it be to every man, that of him it may be ſaid as the Apoſtle of the Corinthians, 2. *Cor.* 9. 2. *that his zeale had provoked very many*, his life had been a light to guide others into the way of peace!

§. 8. 3. *And others that they be not ſcandalized by ſinfull example.*

3 And as it concernes all men to take heed of ſcandalizing others by evill example, ſo likewiſe to take heed of being ſcandalized by ſuch example. It is their ſin that ſcandalize; it may be alſo their

their ruine that are provoked by them. They ſhall receive more puniſhment that lead into evill: they alſo ſhall have miſery that follow, marke our Saviours words *Mat.* 15. 14. *If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch.* When we ſee evill examples, it were wiſedome ro conceive, that theſe are but for triall, as it is ſaid of falſe prophets, *Deut.* 13. 3. *the Lord proveth us to know whether we love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our ſoule.*

Though ſingularity be counted a reproach, yet undoubtedly it is a greater honour, and a ſurer hap-

happineſſe rather to be ſingular with *Noah*, then to bee corrupt with a world of ungodly perſons, to ſwimme againſt the ſtreame towards the ſhore, then to be carried downe the current into perdition, to contend with the wicked for heaven, then to goe downe quietly to hell.

§. 9. *Directions to prevent it.*

For this purpoſe learn we, 1. not to glory in any mans holineſſe or learning, as if they were abſolute, for if ſuch fall thou wilt ſtumble too. It is an heavenly counſell of the Apoſtle. 1. *Cor.* 3. 21. that *no man glory in men.* Remember ſo to follow other mens example as they

they follow Chriſt to ſtick to their judgement, as they ſtick to his word. Blinde obedience to men is a certaine cauſe of ſtumbling. Conceive we the beſt may fall, and then the falling of ſome will not move us to reproach all, their lapſe will not be our ruine.

2 Endeavour to be rooted in knowledge, to be of a ſound judgement, that thou maiſt not need to leane on others judgement, or to make their example thy rule: weakneſſe makes men eaſily to ſtumble, ſtrong walls ſtand though the buttereſſe fall: A ſtrong man can goe though his ſtaffe break

breake, a weake one falls preſently, ſo a man weake in knowledge that leanes on anothers judgement or example if he erre, erres with him, if he falls, falls with him.

3. Avoyde the company of evill men as much as thou maiſt. *Make no friendſhip with an angry man, and with a furious man thou ſhalt not goe, leſt thou learne his wayes, and get a ſnare to thy ſoule. Prov.* 22. 24. 25. Evill company wil either infect or weary a man, one way or another ſcandalize him

4. Favour, not any particular ſin, ſuch a one as favours a ſin is like tinder, the leaſt ſparke ſets it on fire:

fire: he that loves ſin will make any example, any ſhadow of reaſon a ſcandall to himſelfe. An upright heart when hee ſees others fall, becomes more jealous of himſelfe. A corrupt heart is ſecretly glad at other mens ſins, as if they did patronize his owne.

Of

Cap. 4.

Of ſcandalizing in ſpeciall by abuſe of Liberty in things lawfull.

§. 1. *A woe belongs to ſcandalizers by abuſe of liberty in things lawfull.*

THe next way of ſcandalizing is by abuſe of our liberty in things lawfull concerning which we affirme, *That a woe belongs to them that ſcandalize others by abuſe of their liberty in things lawfull againſt charity.* It is frequently forbidden by the Apoſtle, and therefore undoubtedly a woe appertaines to the doing of it. *Rom.* 14. 13. The Apoſtles precept is, *Let us not judge one*

one another any more: but judge this rather that no man put a ſtumbling block or an occaſion to fall in his brothers way: which precept though it bee delivered in termes appliable to ſcandall in generall, yet the *ſeries* of the Apoſtles diſcourſe ſhewes it was ſpecially intended to admoniſh them, that they lay not a ſtumbling block in their brothers way in their uſe of meats and dayes, things indifferent, which is more plainly expreſſed. 1. *Cor.* 8. 9. *Take heed leaſt by any means this liberty* [*about meates*] *of yours, become a ſtumbling block to them that are weake.* And *Gal.* 5. 13. *Brethren*

thren yee have beene called unto liberty, onely uſe not your liberty for an occaſion to the fleſh. But by love ſerve one another.

§. 2. *Reaſons thereof out of S.* Paules *Epiſtles.*

And there are many reaſons of this precept, expreſſed in thoſe ſcriptures. As, 1. it is a corruption of our good, when it becomes anothers harme. Our good will be as no good to us, when it is thus perverted. *Plus aloes quam mellis habet.* As wine mixed with gall and wormewood; ſo is the uſe of a Chriſtians liberty in things lawfull tending to the ruine of his brother. Wherefore the Apoſtle warnes us that *our good be not thereby evill ſpoken of.*

Rom. 14. 16. *All things indeed are pure, but it is evill to him that eateth with offence. v.* 20. 2. It is a depraying of our knowledge of our liberty. Our knowledge of our liberty ſhould ſerve us to direct our ſelves in our way: but not be made an *ignis fatuus* to leade others out of the way. But rather as a *Mercury*, or hand to direct them in it, as a candle to enlighten us how to remove ſtones and *ſtumbling blocks out of the way of Gods people*, that the weake be not caſt downe by them. *We know ſaith the Apoſtle*, 1. Cor. 8. 1. *that we all have knowledge, yet we are to take heed that through*

through our knowledge our weake brother periſh not for whom Chriſt died. v. 11. 3. it is an unreaſonable, and unequall thing, and ſo againſt juſtice, that the priviledge of one ſhould be the undoing of another, that the benefit of one ſhould become the detriment of another, that one Chriſtians liberty ſhould be enjoyed ſo as to harme others. Our liberty is not *res tanti, a thing of that value*, that it ſhould at all times bee uſed even to the ruine of our brother. The pleaſing of our own wills ſhould not bee ſo accounted of, as to have them, what ever miſchief enſue to our brother. 'Tis

true if the uſe of our liberty did make us accepted with God, then it were equall wee ſhould pleaſe him, though we diſpleaſe all men. *But the kingdome of God is not meat and drink: but righteouſneſſe and peace and joy in the holy Ghoſt.* Rom. 14. 17. *Meat commendeth us not to God: for neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worſe.* 1. *Cor.* 8. 8. And the like may bee ſaid of other indifferent things, wherefore the good of enjoying our liberty is not ſuch as may countervaile the evill of ſcandalizing our brother. *Iuſtice in the Embleme waighes with even skales*

skales: So ſhould we in the uſe of our liberty, not account our liberty ſo waighty, as that our brothers good be accounted light. 4. To abuſe our liberty to the ſcandalizing of another, is againſt the charity wee owe to him. *If thy brother bee grieved with thy meat: now walkeſt thou not charitably*, ſaith the Apoſtle *Rom.* 14. 15. The property of true charity is χρηστεύεσθαι. 1. *Cor.* 13. 4. *To be kind and beneficiall to others*, not to bee hurtfull, and unkind: *It ſeekes not her owne. v.* 5. When it may wrong another. He then that ſhall be ſo ſettled on this reſolution, as that hee will not a-

bate an inch of his conveniency for the preventing of a miſchiefe, or at leaſt a vexation to his brother ſhewes that he loves himſelfe much, his brother litle or nothing at all. 5. And as this offenſive uſe of our liberty diſcovers want of charity, ſo it doth alſo want of mercy. For it is a kind of ſpirituall ſlaying or wounding of our brother. The Apoſtle 1. *Cor.* 8. 11. 12. ſaith that by ſuch offences the ſcandalizers doe τύπτειν τὴν συνείδησιν ἀσθενοῦσαν, *beate and wound the weak conſcience of their brother*, as a man that doth kill another with a deſtructive weapon, and that conſequently the offended

fended perſon ἀπολλῦται, periſheth, that is *quantum per ipſum ſtat, as much as pertaines to him.* And to the like purpoſe diſſwading from uſing our liberty in meates with offence hee forbids it in this phraſe, μὴ τῷ βρώματι ἀπόλλυε. *Rom.* 14. 15. *Deſtroy not him with thy meat*, and againe, *v.* 20. μὴ ἕνεκεν βρώματος κατάλυε τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ. *For meat deſtroy not, or diſſolve not the work of God*, that is the ſoule of thy brother. As if ſcandalizing were a deſtroying or murther, ſuch as a ſoule is capable of. For what is the murther of the ſoule but grieving it, perverting it, cauſing it to ſin, to feele Gods

anger? This is that which the ſcripture calleth *Death*, as being indeed the onely death of an immortall ſpirit, ſo that to cauſe this by uſing of our liberty is againſt the mercy wee are to ſhew to our brothers ſoule, which is alſo aggravated in that it is a *deſtroying of Gods worke*, that is, the ſoule, which is *divinæ particula auræ*, *that particle as it were of Gods breath.* Gen. 2.7. *That image of the inviſible God*, farre ſurpaſſing in worth the whole maſſe of corporeall beings, and therefore the deſtruction of it much exceeding the deſtruction of the body. 6. Adde hereunto,

unto, that this ſcandalizing muſt needes hinder the peace, the ſweet peace that ſhould bee betweene Chriſtians that are members of the ſame body. For whereas they *ſhould follow after the things that make for peace. Rom.* 14. 19. This courſe is oppoſite thereto. Peace is to be followed by yielding ſomewhat to other mens deſires, by being indulgent to their weakeneſſe, by relaxation of that rigour we may ſtand upon. But in this way of ſcandalizing another by the uſe of our liberty there's no yielding to the deſires of others, no indulgence to their weakneſſe, no remiſ-

ſion of rigour, yea beſides it cauſeth a jealouſy in the offended perſon of his enmity towards him, who would doe that which hee is ſo much offended with. Which apprehenſion will aſſuredly cauſe him to look *obliquo oculo*, awry on him, that offends, and inſtead of imbracing him, flye off farther from him. And indeed whether there bee enmity or evill will or no in the ſcandalizer, ſurely there is ſome pride, and contempt of his brother in this ſin. For the Apoſtle when hee ſpeakes of the fountaine of this evill, derives it from the ſwelling of knowledge, *that his knowledge*

knowledge puffeth him up. 1. *Cor.* 8. 1. And againe when he forbids the cauſe of ſcandalizing in the uſe of things indifferent hee chargeth thus, μὴ ἐξουθενείτω. *Let him not deſpiſe or ſet at nought his brother.* Intimating that if he were not puffed up, with his knowledge, nor ſet at nought his brother, but eſteemed him as hee ſhould, hee would prize him above his owne conveniences, and remit his uſe of them for his ſake. Now pride whereby a man deſpiſeth another as it is a great evill in it ſelfe, ſo is it the greater in that by it *commeth contention. Prov.* 13. 10. 8. Furthermore the obligation

obligation of christians bindes them to the utmost of their power to further the kingdome of God in men; his glory, and their salvation. The mercy we have our selves received should move us to endeavour to make others partakers of the same, we being called should call others, as *Philip* having found the *Messiah* invites *Nathaniel* to come to him *Iohn* 1.45. *Peter being converted was bound to strengthen his brethren. Luke.22.* 32. Wherefore for such a one not onely not to strengthen, but even for unnecessary things, *in which the kingdome of God consists not*, to weaken them

them is very contrary to to the heavenly calling wherewith we are called, to the unſpeakable grace we have received: doubtleſſe the Apoſtles rule is moſt equall for ſuch, *That whether they eat or drink, or whatſoever they doe, they doe all to the glory of God, giving none offence neither to the Iewes, nor the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God; But as he himſelfe did, who pleaſed all men in all things, not ſeeking his owne profit, but the profit of many that they may be ſaved.* 1. *Cor.* 10. 3.32.33. 9. Vnto which the example of our Lord Chriſt ſhould yet more forcibly urge us, as the ſame

ſame Apoſtle preſſeth it. *Rom.*15.1.2.3. *We that are ſtrong ought to beare with the infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves. Let every one of us pleaſe his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelfe, but as it is written, The reproaches of them, that reproached thee, fell on me.* How much doe they degenerate from Chriſts example, whom they ought to follow, who are unwilling to ſuſpend the uſe of their liberty for their pleaſure, whereas the Lord Chriſt laid aſide his glory, *emptied himſelfe, and became of no reputation for their ſake.* 10. Finally,

nally what is ſcandalizing our brethren for our liberties ſake, but a forgetting what love Chriſt vouchſafed them and us in that hee dyed for them and us? Chriſt dyed for them that hee might ſave them, wee let them periſh for our pleaſure. Such practiſe is doubtleſſe not onely a ſin *againſt the brethren, but againſt Chriſt much more.* 1. *Cor.* 8. 12. All theſe reaſons put together declare how great a ſin this kind of ſcandal is, and therefore, how juſtly a woe belongs to it. And ſo much the greater a woe is awarded to ſuch ſcandalizers as it is committed with, and ſo much the

the greater pride, wilfulnes, or wantones: when it is done *data opera*, *of ſet purpoſe*, or with evident foreſight of the grievance & harme enſuing thereby to their brother. For theſe things make it the more voluntary, and therefore the more ſinfull.

§. 3. *The difficulty of this point, and quæres propounded to cleare it.*

But then it is a very hard and knotty point in many caſes to know when a chriſtian doeth thus abuſe his liberty in things indifferent, when not: it being a hard thing to underſtand, when men are weak, when wilfull: a hard thing to determin what to doe when the harme of another by our uſe of our liberty is only ſuſpected or feared it may

may be, but on the other ſide probably may not be: what is to be done when it is likely that there may be ſcandall either way in uſing or not uſing our liberty; what regard is to be had to our brethren in caſe the Magiſtrate interpoſeth his authority. From theſe and ſundry more ſuch difficulties ariſe many doubts to the diſquiet of tender conſciences, and ſinfull preſumptions in ſome, ſuperſtitious feares in others, which beget no ſmall evill, which points nevertheleſſe I finde handled *ex profeſſo* by few: onely incidentally to other arguments here and there writers

writers cleare ſome of the doubts belonging to this argument: wherefore I have conceived it may be of good uſe to endeavour the clearing of ſuch difficulties incident to this argument as I have either by reading, meditation or conference met with, not diſcouraged by the conſcience of mine owne inſufficience, but truſting in gods aſſiſtance, & with all aſſureing my ſelfe that among readers there will bee ſome, that conceive *eſſe aliquid prodire tenus.* And that the order I uſe may appeare, 1. I ſhall briefly ſay ſomewhat of things lawful and indifferent, and our liber-

ty

ty in their uſe. 2. Of the waies whereby a chriſtians conſcience may be reſtrained from uſing this liberty. 3. becauſe the fourteenth chapter of the Epiſtle of S. *Paul* to the Romans, and the eighth, ninth, and tenth, of the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, are the ſeat of this argument, I ſhall deliver as rightly as I can a ſumme of the Apoſtles reſolutions concerning this point in thoſe chapters. 4. Out of theſe things premiſed, and ſuch other paſſages of holy ſcripture and reaſons as I finde pertinent thereto, I ſhall endeavour to reſolve ſundry queſtions or caſes of this matter

matter needfull to bee cleared: yet not magiſterially obtruding theſe reſolutions on others, but ſubmitting them to examination, as remembring *that the ſpirits of the Prophets are ſubject to the Prophets.* 1. *Cor.* 14. 32.

§. 4. *Anſwere of the firſt quære what are things lawfull & indifferent, and what is our liberty in their uſe.*

In anſwering the firſt of theſe points, wee are to take notice that there are ſome things lawful, which are in themſelves duties, and commanded by God to be done, which yet are to bee omitted at ſometimes, for the avoyding of ſcandall. As for inſtance, reproving of our neighbour is a duty enjoyned by God, yet to bee omitted at ſome times, when the

the perſon to be reproved would bee likely rather hardened, then amended by reproofe. In like manner may it bee ſaid alſo of excommunication, when there is danger of ſchiſme; of puniſhing malefactors, when the iſſue would bee the overthrow of the common wealth. *Pro vitando ſcandalo ceſſat rigor diſciplinæ*, is an old rule and a good one, *To avoyde ſcandall the rigour of diſcipline ceaſeth.* This truth is grounded 1. On that rule, which is among *Divines* received, that *præcepta negativa obligant ſemper, & ad ſemper, they alwaies binde and to alwaies*, that is, what is forbidden

bidden by God may at no time bee done: no man may ſinne to avoyde ſcandall; *Their damnation is juſt*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.*3.8.that ſay, *Let us doe evill that good may come.* But on the other ſide affirmative precepts *obligant ſemper, ſed non ad ſemper, They alwayes bind, but not to alwaies*, that is though they ſtand in force alwaies, yet not ſo as to tye us to doe the things required at all times. As for inſtance though Gods command alwaies bindes a chriſtian to pray, to give almes &c. yet not to doe theſe alwaies: but when the glory of God, and the good of our brethren re-

quire

quire it. The knowledge of which time is partly to bee taken from rules and examples in holy ſcripture, partly from godly prudence and reaſon, which every man ſhould have as a light to guide him in diſcerning the circumſtances, which make ſuch actions neceſſary. 2. On this conſideration, that thoſe actions of reproofe, puniſhing vice, and the like to them are commanded principally to this end, that they may doe good to men for the curing of their evills, the furthering of vertue in them. Wherefore when prudence ſhewes that ſuch actions would bee either

fruitleſſe

fruitles in reſpect of their end, or contrariwiſe harmfull, they are to bee forborne: in this caſe there is *Libertas non faciendi, a liberty not to doe them*, or rather hee ought not to doe them. Concerning this ſort of things lawfull, wherein our liberty is to bee reſtrained to avoyde ſcandall, there needs not much more to be ſaid, but that when according to true prudence they appeare to bee neceſſary for Gods glory, our owne ſalvation, or our brethrens good, then they are to bee done without regard of ſcandall conſequent; if to the contrary to bee omitted. Few ſcruples there are

are in men about theſe things, and ſuch as bee, may find ſome ſatisfaction from the reſolutions of the Caſes concerning things indifferent. The ſecond ſort of things in wch we may abuſe our liberty to the ſcandall of our brethren are things indifferẽt. Now by things indifferent I underſtand not according to the vulgar acception of actions indifferent, ſuch actions as are neither much praiſe worthy, nor much to be reproved; becauſe there is no ſpeciall matter of goodneſſe or hurt in them; as for a man to eat when he is hungry, to drinke when he is thirſty, to keepe due houres

for meales, or on the contrary to omit theſe: which though they may bee in common acception called indifferent, yet according to exact ſpeaking they are not indifferent, but either right or ſinfull as they are clothed with circumſtances. But by things indifferent I mean ſuch actions as in their nature, *in ſe, & of themſelvs*, are neither right nor ſinfull, neither commanded nor forbidden, as to eat or not to eat ſuch meats, to eat ſweet meats or ſowre, to goe or not to goe on foot, to goe on foot or to ride, to weare ſuch cloathes or not to wear them, to wear linnen or woollen, to expreſſe

preſſe our mind by word of mouth or writing, to write on paper or parchment, to ſpeake in Latin or Engliſh. In which, and a thouſand ſuch like, a chriſtian hath both the liberty which is called *Libertas contradictionis, liberty in contradictories*, to doe or not to doe, as to eat egges, or not to eat them, to weare a cloake, or not to weare one; and alſo the liberty which is called *libertas contrarietatis, liberty in contraries*, as in eating ſweet or bitter food,; in wearing white or black In which there is a greater liberty than there is about duties. For though wee are not bound to doe all

duties at all times, yet wee may not at any time doe the contrary: as, though wee are not at all times bound to reprove, yet at no time to flatter. But in things indifferent there is *Libertas ad utrumlibet, liberty in either of which we like*, to doe this or not to doe it, to doe this, or the contrary to it. That there are actions of men that are *in ſe, of themſelves abſtracted from particularizing circumſtances* in their nature indifferent as hath bin ſaid, I take it as a certaine truth, grounded on the ſpeech of the Apoſtle. 1.*Cor.*8.8. *Neither if wee eat are wee the better, neither if we eat not are we the worſe;*

worſe; like unto which are thoſe *Rom.* 14. 5. 6. 14. 20. and on plaine reaſon. For the contrary aſſertion muſt needes ſuppoſe that Gods lawes doe command or forbid every action in ſpeciall, which is not ſo, as may appeare by induction, in the particulars before mentioned, and thouſands of the like; I have read of ſome that have gone about to maintaine, that there is nothing indifferent: but this opinion either hath beene retracted by the author, or conceived ſo abſurd that it hath had either none or very few followers. In the manner that I have declared I take it as certain,

That there are indifferent things. It is granted that all humane actions *in individuo*, in the particular or ſingular, that flowe from deliberate reaſon are either morally good, or evill, as agreeing to, or diſgreeing from Gods law. I ſaid *ſignantèr* to bee *marked*, that flow from *deliberate reaſon*, to exclude ſuch particular actions of men as being naturall actions from naturall inſtinct, or force of imagination, are not of morall conſideration; ſuch as are the handling of the beard, rubbing the noſe, ſhaking the legge when a man thinks not of them, talking or walking in ſleepe.

Theſe

Theſe as not comming from reaſon, nor having any end are accounted not as *rationall actions*, but as *animal* only, though they be done by men, and therfore neither good nor bad. But for all ſingular actions which are not of morall conſideration, that come under a law, being clothed with circumſtances ſpecificating and ſingularizing them, *as they come from reaſon, as Aquin.* 2ª. 2æ. *q.* 18. *art.* 9. or as *Paræus* in *Rom.* 14. *dub.* 10. *ratione principij, hoc eſt ratione electionis & intentionis quâ fiunt, in regard of their principle, that is the election and intention by which they are done*, are either

either good or bad, agreeing or diſagreeing from Gods law. Thus every act of eating, or wearing apparrell, or going a journey with this or that intent, in this or that manner, is either good or bad, right or ſinfull. But then it is as certaine that many actions of men *in the generall, or in ſpecie, in the kind of them* conſidered without reſtraint of particularizing circumſtances afore they are *in actu exercito*, that is, *actually done* are indifferent, as I have declared. And it is further to bee obſerved, that in theſe indifferent or middle things, as they are called, the chriſtian Church hath greater

greater liberty then the Iewiſh Synagogue. For many things were not indifferent to them, which are indifferent to us: It was not indifferent to them to eat ſwines fleſh or not, to weare a garment of linſey-woolſey or not, with many more. But it is to us indifferent to eate ſwines fleſh or not, to wear a garment of linſey-woolſey or not. The ordinances whereby the Iews were reſtrained in their liberty, were a *yoake* which *they were not able to beare.* *Acts.* 15.10. But it is removed from our necks by Chriſts death, *who hath aboliſhed the law of Commandements contained in*

ordinances Epheſ. 2. 15. And *in this liberty wee are commanded to ſtand faſt that wee bee not intangled again with the yoak of bondage. Gal.* 5. 1. A liberty then we have in things indifferent, & to renege and deny, it is to put on our neckes that yoake that Chriſt hath freed us from.

§. 5. *What waies our liberty in things indifferent may be reſtrained.*

Nevertheleſſe though God hath not made theſe indifferent things *intrinſecally*, or in their own nature good or evill, yet extrinſecally they may be made good or evill: and that ſundry wayes. 1. By the command or prohibiting of the Magiſtrate. For though the Magiſtrates authority cannot make

make, (for examples ſake) the eating of fleſh, or the wearing of a weapon unlawfull to me, as a thing prohibited by God, and thereby *intrinſecally* evill: yet if hee forbid them, who is the lawfull governour, and hath power to make lawes, or ordinances, it is ſin againſt God to doe theſe things: becauſe he contemnes the law of the Magiſtrate, againſt the common good, which is the ground of it, and the authority, concerning which God hath commanded. *Rom.* 13. 1. *Let every ſoule be ſubject to the higher powers: For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of*

of God. Whoſoever therfore reſiſteth the power reſiſteth the ordinãce of God: & they that reſiſt ſhall receive to themſelves damnatiõ. The ſame is to be conceived of the commands of Eccleſiaſticall governors according to their authority, of naturall parents, of tutors, teachers & Maſters *according to the fleſh*, to the which God hath commanded us *to be ſubiect. Epheſ. 6.* And elſewhere. Whence it was that the *Rechabites* would drinke no wine becauſe of *Ionadab the ſonne of Rechab his command not to drinke wine. Ierem. 35. 6.* For though by ſuch mandates they cannot take away our originall liberty, yet they

can

can reſtraine the uſe: the liberty we have in things indifferent being the proper matter for the Magiſtrate or Governour to ſhew his authority of making lawes in. 2. By a vow whereby a man bindes himſelfe to doe or not to doe, touſe or not to uſe his liberty in ſuch or ſuch an indifferent thing. For by vowes and promiſſory oathes, a man may make that neceſſary or ſinfull to himſelfe, which neither is *intrinſecally* good nor evil, neceſſary nor ſinful nor would be to him ſuch, but for the vow he made: becauſe God hath enjoyned *Deuter. 23. 21. When thou ſhalt vow a vow unto the Lord*

Lord thy God: thou ſhalt not ſlack to pay it, for the Lord thy God wil ſurely require it of thee, & it would be ſinne in thee. But if thou ſhalt forbeare to vow, it ſhall be no ſinne in thee. And *Pſal.* 15. 4. it is made a requiſite condition *of him that ſhall dwell in Gods Tabernacle, that though hee ſweare to his owne hurt, he change not.* 3. Likewiſe a man may by his owne opiniõ make that *extrinſecally* evill which is not ſo *intrinſecally.* For though a mans opinion cannot make that to bee duty which is not ſo: yet it may make that to be ſin which otherwiſe would not bee ſo, according to the Apoſtles

ſtles reſolution. Rom. 14. 14. *To him that eſteemeth any thing to be uncleane, to him it is uncleane. ver.* 23. *And hee that doubteth is damned if he eat: becauſe he eateth not of faith: For whatſoever is not of faith is ſinne.* 4. The good or evill of our neighbour binds us to uſe or not to uſe our liberty, as it may further their good, or be a ſcandall to them. *For though wee are called to liberty, yet wee may not uſe our liberty as an occaſion to the fleſh, but by love ſerve one another.* Gal. 5. 13. Now it is to be obſerved that which is *intrinſecally* good by vertue of Gods command, is *intrinſecally* good

good to all, to whom that command is given (who are the whole world) and that which is *intrinſecally* evil, is evil to all to whom Gods Commandement forbids it, (who are the whole world) and therefore it is ſin to any to doe that which hee forbids, as to lye, blaſpheam &c. But that which is *extrinſecally* good, is not good to all, but only to thoſe to whom the obligation reacheth, and for the time it laſteth; nor that which is *extrinſecally* evill as being contrary to the governours commandement or to the reſtrained parties vow, or the verdict of his owne conſcience, or being

ſcandalous

ſcandalous and hurtfull to his neighbour, is *extrinſecally* evill to all, but only thoſe who are under that government, that vow, that opinion, to whom it happens that their uſe of their liberty may become the harme of their neighbour. That which is evil for a ſubject of the King of England to doe, may not bee evill to the ſubject of the King of Spaine, who hath made no ſuch law as the King of England: And that vow that binds him that made it, bindes not another which hath made no ſuch vow; and that opinion which one man hath, and that harme of our brother which

which reſtraines one man from the uſe of his liberty, reſtraines not another, whoſe action would cauſe no ſuch harme: in whoſe mind is no ſuch opinion.

§ 6. *The ſummary of the Apoſtles reſolutions about ſcandall in the uſe of things indifferent delivered.* Rom. 14.

Having premiſed theſe things I am next to enquire into the Apoſtles reſolutions delivered, *Rom.* 14. 1. *Cor.* 8. 9. 10. *chapters* concerning the forbearing of the uſe of our liberty in caſe of ſcandall, which was then in agitation, and determined by the Apoſtle in thoſe chapters. Which that wee may the better underſtand, we are to take notice, that, as appeares by S. *Lukes* hiſtory of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, and likewiſe by other

other hiſtories of *Ioſephus*, *Suetonius*, *Tacitus*, and others, the nation of the Iewes was, in thoſe dayes wherein S. *Paul* wrote his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, diſperſed over many countries of the world, in *Aſia*, *Ægypt*, *Greece*, *Italy*: and particularly that many of that nation dwelt in *Rome*. In which citty at that time, the great city, *which had dominion over a great part of the earth*, the Iewes retained the religion and rites of their nation preſcribed by *Moſes*, and were for their Sabbaths, Circumciſion, abſtaining from ſwines fleſh, and ſuch like rites derided by the

the Satyriſts of thoſe times famous at *Rome*, *Horace*, *Iuvenall*, *Perſius* and the reſt. Now of theſe Iewes at *Rome* it pleaſed God to convert ſome to the Chriſtian faith, as well as ſome of the *Gentiles*. Wee are likewiſe to remember that while the *Ceremoniall* law of *Moſes* was in force, the Iewes conceived themſelves as ſtrictly bounde to the obſervances of meates and dayes, and other ordinances of *Moſes*, as of the decalogue, unleſſe in ſuch caſes as wherein the obſerving of them was againſt a morall duty. For then that of the Prophet took place, *I will have*

mercy

mercy and not ſacrifice, as our Saviour determines *Mat.* 12. 7. Whereupon the godly Iewes made conſcience of obedience to the ceremoniall lawes, as to other morall precepts. When in a viſion all manner of foure footed beaſts of the earth, & wild beaſts, and creeping things and foules of the aire were preſented to Peter to kill and eate, he replyed, *not ſo Lord, for I have never eatē any thing that is common or unclean* Acts. 10. 14. Hence they thought thēſelves bound rather to ſuffer any torment, than to eat ſo much as a bit of ſwines fleſh, as appears in the example of

of *Eleazar*, and the mother and her ſeaven ſons, in the hiſtorie of the *Maccabees*. 2. *Maccab. ch.* 6. & 7. wherefore when the Goſpell began to bee preached, and the ceremonies of *Moſes* his law to bee diſclaimed, and neglected, much contention aroſe betweene the Chriſtians that were of the Circumciſion, and thoſe of the *Gentiles*, concerning the neceſſity of obſerving *Moſes* law: in ſo much that it was thought neceſſary to call a counſell of the Apoſtles and Elders at *Hieruſalem* to decide this difference. *Acts.* 15. So that although by Chriſts death the neceſſity

ceſſity of obſerving them was taken away: and the Goſpell being promulgated, their obſervation became dangerous, as we read *Gal.*5. yet ſuch eſteem had the ceremonies of the law gotten, partly by their originall inſtitution, and partly *tractu temporis, by a long tract of time* in which they had ſtood in force, that many Chriſtians not ſufficiently inſtructed in their liberty feared to neglect or break them after their initiation into Chriſtianity: as on the other ſide thoſe that were well inſtructed in their liberty did neglect them ſecurely, they made no ſcruple of eating meates, of neglecting

neglecting new moones, and the like Feſtivalls. And thus was it among the *Romans* when S. *Paul* wrot this Epiſtle to them. There were ſome that would not eat meats prohibited by *Moſes* law, but rather eat hearbes; nor would they omit the obſervation of dayes, as not knowing their liberty therein, ſo that if it happened they did eat ſuch meats, or neglect ſuch dayes it was with doubting and regrete of conſcience. Theſe the Apoſtle calleth *weake brethren, weake in the faith.* Others there were among the *Romans*, who made no queſtion of eating any ſort of meats,

meats, nor regarded dayes as knowing they had lawfull liberty therein. And theſe are called *ſtrong in the faith* by the Apoſtle: Now if this diverſity had been onely in practiſe, or opinion, it had been ſomewhat tollerable. But the difference in opinion, and deformity in practiſe bred among them (as uſually it doth) diſcord and diviſion. For whereas Chriſtian charity and holy wiſdome ſhould have prevented all quarrell between them, all harming each other, contrariwiſe it ſo fell out that the ſtrong deſpiſed the weak as more ſcrupulous then needed, and the weak with an ag-

grieved mind judged the ſtrong as licentious, and unholy; and whereas ſometimes the weake by the example of the ſtrong might bee induced to doe that wch, though lawfull, they doubted whether it were ſo or not, their conſciences were thereby wounded. To eaſe the Chriſtians of this grievance the Apoſtle as an equall arbitrator thus decides the controverſy. In this caſe, *the ſtrong ſhould take to them the weake in faith*, ſhewing kindneſſe & love to them, but not imprudently intangle them with diſputes which bred more doubts in them, while they ſought to cure their

their errour about meats and dayes: that *they ſhould not deſpiſe or* ſleight them for their weakneſſe, but ſhew them all reſpect as believers: that they ſhould enjoy their knowledge to themſelves, but not *uſe their liberty to the grievance of their brethrē:* that they ſhould not ſo looke to their own much content in the uſe of their priviledge as to damnifie their brethren, and to wound *their conſcience.* On the other ſide the Apoſtle admoniſheth the weake, that they neither cenſure nor judge *their brethren,* in the uſe of their liberty, nor yet venture upon the uſe of their law-

tull liberty, with doubting conſciences, but bee ſure that they bee well reſolved in their judgements afore they enter on the practiſe.

§ 7. *And* 1. *Cor.* 8. 9. 10. *chapters.*

Concerning the other Scripture in which the Apoſtle ſets downe his reſolutions in point of ſcandals the caſe was thus, *Corinth* was an eminent beautifull citty called by *Tully lumen Græciæ, the eye of Greece,* but a *Pagan* citty. In which the people were wont to worſhip Idols of *Iupiter, Mars, Minerva* &c. to theſe they built Temples, and offered ſacrifices of oxen and other beaſts, as wee read they would have done at *Lyſtra.*

Lyſtra. Acts. 14. 13. Of theſe oxen and other ſacrifices ſome part of the fleſh the Prieſts of the Idols had for their ſhare: ſome part was eaten by the people that offered, at the Feaſts called *Lectiſterma* in the Idols Temple, ſome part was perhaps ſold in the ſhambles, and bought by any that would, and eaten in private houſes. Concerning Idolothytes or things ſacrificed to Idols: it was the ſin of the *Iſraelites* in *Shittim*, *Numb.* 25. 2. *Pſal.*106. 28. *That they did eat the ſacrifices of the dead.* And *Revel.*2.14. in the Epiſtle to the Church of *Pergamus* the angell of

that Church is accuſed that there were ſome that *held the doctrine of Balaam to eat things ſacrificed to Idols*, and in the Apoſtles decree it was given in charge to chriſtians. *Acts.* 15.29. Ἀπέχεσθαι εἰδωλοθύτων. *To abſtaine from things ſacrificed to Idols*, called v:20. ἀλισγημάτων τῶν εἰδώλων, *the pollutions of Idols*. Now it pleaſed God to gather to himſelfe in *Corinth much people* by the miniſtery of S. *Paul*, *Acts.* 18. 10. although in that, as in other cities where chriſtians were a part remained infidels. The converted chriſtians were for the moſt part of the meaner ſort of peo-

ple,

ple, as the Apoſtle tells them, 1.*Cor*.1.26. *yee ſee your calling brethren, how that not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.* In this calling it happened that ſometime the wife was converted to the chriſtian faith, the husband remaining in unbeliefe; ſometime the husband converted, the wife unconverted, ſometime the ſervant converted, and not the Maſter, the child and not the Father, this man a chriſtian, his next neighbour a *Pagan*, as appeares by the Apoſtles ſuppoſitions. 1.*Cor*. 7.13. &c. Inſomuch that chriſtians were mingled with

Pagans, as in ſome countries, *Turks* and Chriſtians, Iewes & Chriſtians, or as in England Proteſtants &Papiſts,excepting that the *Pagans* were the greater number, & more potent party. This vicinity,and theſe relations cauſed a neceſſity of civill converſe betweene them: For otherwiſe the chriſtians *muſt needes goe out of the world.* 1. *Cor.* 5. 10. Theſe things likewiſe occaſioned the *Pagans* ſometimes to invite the chriſtians to goe with them to their Feaſts at the Idols Temple: ſometimes to their owne tables. The meat that was dreſſed at their Feaſts and other meales

meales ſometimes happened to be ſuch meat as had beene offered before in ſacrifice to the Idoll, either bought in the ſhambles, or ſent by a neighbour as a gift. The chriſtians were of divers ſorts, ſome that had knowledge 1. *Cor.* 8. 10. ſome that had not *the ſame meaſure of knowledge, but were weak, had weak conſciences v.* 7. 9. The caſe ſtanding thus, the doubt was how the chriſtians in the citty of *Corinth* were to carry themſelves upon theſe occaſions. The reſolution of the Apoſtle is this. That they might by no meanes eat Idolothytes or things ſacrificed to Idols, ἐν εἰδωλ-

λείῳ in the Idols temple. *For that is to partake of the table of Devils.* 1. *Cor.* 10. 21. an Idoll ſervice, and likewiſe a *ſcandall to a weake brother to embolden him to eat thoſe things which are offered to Idols.* 1. *Cor.* 8. 10. And ſo this ſcandalizing is by evill example, in a thing manifeſtly evill. But if chriſtians were invited to a private houſe by an unbeleever, they might goe, and eat the meat that had been offered to Idols, either wittingly, or unwittingly, or if the meat offered to the Idoll were to bee ſold in the ſhambles they might buy it, dreſſe it, eat it asking no queſtion for

conſcience

conſcience ſake. For the earth being the Lords, and the fulneſſe thereof, the fleſh by the offering to the Idoll could not bee ſo alienated from him, but that Gods people might eat it as Gods creature given them for foode. Nevertheleſſe if any were preſent, that being weake in knowledge ſhould think it unlawfull to eat ſuch meat, and by ſaying, *This is offered in ſacrifice to Idols*, ſhould intimate to thee his opinion of unlawfullneſſe to eat it, and his griefe to ſee thee partake of it, in this caſe the chriſtian were to forbeare eating to avoyde offence, which might bee taken

taken by his brother, being grieved, or elſe by his example in eating that meat which hee knew to be offered to an Idol, emboldened to thinke that in ſome ſort he might communicate with an Idolater in Idol-ſervice, that there is no unreconcileable difference betweene Paganiſme and Chriſtianity. Which might eaſily happen to a weak chriſtian not fully inſtructed in the truth of his chriſtian liberty, how farre it extendeth, and where it endeth.

§. 8. Que. 1. *Who are to avoyde ſcandalizing by abuſe of liberty in things indifferent.*

In this briefe manner I have as rightly and clearly as I could, gathered the matters of thoſe chapters: from whence wee may draw

draw ſundry things uſefull for the reſolving of queſtions incident to this point, to which I now haſten; where firſt it may be asked, who are bound to avoyde ſcandalizing of others by their uſe of their liberty in things lawfull? *Anſw.* Whereto the anſwere is: All chriſtians as chriſtians: for this is a fruit of chriſtian charity which all are bound to have. *They that are called to liberty are not to uſe their liberty for an occaſion to the fleſh, but by love to ſerve one another. Gal.* 5.13. The ſame God that hath by his letters patents given his people ſo ample a priviledge, as leave to

uſe

uſe all indifferent things, hath thought good nevertheleſſe to limit it by the law of charity.

§. 9. Que. 2. *Scandalizing of whom by ſuch abuſe is to be avoyded.*

A ſecond queſtion may be, whether a chriſtian be bound to avoyde ſcandalizing of evill, or unbelieving perſons by the uſe of this liberty? *Anſw.* whereto I anſwer: That although the Apoſtle in the places *Rom.* 14. and 1. *Cor.* 8. which I called the ſeat of this argument, ſpeak only of not ſcandalizing our weake brother by the uſe of our liberty, that being ſufficient for the preſent occaſion: yet in the concluſion of his diſpute. 1. *Cor.* 10. 32. Hee chargeth chriſtians *to give*

none offence neither to the Iewes, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God, but as he himſelfe did, who pleaſed all men in all things, not ſeeking his owne profit, but the profit of many that they might bee ſaved. Which rule of S. *Paul* is conformable to the practiſe of our Lord Chriſt who payd tribute money to the Collectors who were neither themſelves, nor their maſters any of Chriſts Diſciples, but evill perſons, and that for this end *leaſt he ſhould offend them. Mat.* 17.27. And if the ſcripture require (as it doth 1. *Pet.* 3. 1. and that of women) *good converſation that*

thoſe

thoſe who obey not the word may without the word bee wonne by good converſation, undoubtedly for the ſame reaſon it requires we ſhould not ſcandalize them by abuſe of our liberty, leaſt they bee farther off, from being wonn. There is a kind of charity or love due to them, and conſequently ſome care of not offending them. There's not due the ſame tenderneſſe of offending an unbeliever or evill perſon as of a chriſtian brother; but as there is due to a chriſtian brother a more affectionate love, ſo likewiſe a more tender regard of not ſcandalizing him. Servants are to bee carefull

full of not hurting their Maſters cattle, but moſt carefull of their children: ſo ought chriſtians to bee carefull of not offending evill men, who are Gods creatures, but moſt carefull not to offend the godly, who are his children. Yet that the reſolution of this queſtion may be more full, I conceive, that unbelievers or evill perſons are differently conſiderable in this matter of not ſcandalizing them, according to the diverſity of their eſtrangedneſſe from the true faith, or obedience. For, 1. there are ſome who though they yet profeſſe not the truth, nor ſhew themſelves to be

be regenerate, have yet ſome beginnings of affection to the truth we profeſſe, and the obedience we practiſe: that are leſſe vitious, more inclinable to hearken to the truth then ſome others that begin to perceive ſome part of the truth. As our Saviour ſaid of the Scribe that anſwered him diſcreetly, telling him, *that to love the Lord with all the heart, and with all the underſtanding, and with all the ſoule, and with all the ſtrength, and to love our neighbour as our ſelves is more then all whole burnt offerings and ſacrifices* (whereby hee ſhewed that he had not the dreggs of *Phariſaiſme* in him, which

which was to conceive themſelves righteous by obſerving the outward ceremonies, and duties of the law) *that hee was not farre from the kingdome of God: Mark.* 12.34. Now of ſuch we are to bee tender that we ſcandalize not them by intempeſtive uſe of our liberty. If a *Nicodemus* among the *Phariſees* be but a liſtner to his doctrine, our Saviour thinks good not to reject him, but to draw him on further: if a Papiſt yet remaining in the *Roman* Church begin to miſlike the Idolatry of that church, their magnifying their owne merits &c. and yet out of a reverend eſteem though erroneous

erroneous of the Church of *Romes* orders miſlikes the eating of fleſh on a friday, Charity ſhould make me rather forbeare in ſuch a ones preſence to eat fleſh at ſuch a time then to give occaſion to ſuch a one to count our religion licentious, and thereby eſtrange him the further from the truth. For ſith a principall end of not offending our brother by the abuſe of our liberty, is that wee may ſeeke his profit, that he may bee ſaved, if in true judgement, or our opinion, the not ſcandalizing him would tend to that end, we ought to forbeare our liberty, that wee may not offend him.

him. It being a ſure rule, *Finis dat mediis ordinem, menſuram, & amabilitatem. The end gives order, meaſure, and deſireableneſſe to the meanes thereto tending.* 2. Some unbelieving, evill, or unregenerate perſons are further off from the kingdome of God being plaine, and profeſſed adverſaries to the way of truth, and righteouſneſſe, but yet not out of wilfull malice, but blinde zeale. As the Iewes of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *that they had a Zeale of God, though not according to knowledge. Rom.* 10. 2. Now the ſcandalizing of ſuch men is not ſo much to bee regarded as of the former:

former : becauſe there is leſſe likelyhood that our forbearing our liberty ſhould alter their judgements, or practiſe, yet for as much as according to the nature of vehement perſons out of ignorance though they bee impetuouſly carried in that they doe, yet if they diſcover their errour they are as ſoone turned: therefore it is probable that ſome yielding to them may win upon their affections, and make way for ſuch inſinuation as may give opportunity to diſcover to them the truth, we ought ſo far to abſtain from our liberty as not to confirm them in hard conceits of the

the truth, and ſo farre to pleaſe them in the uſe of our lawfull liberty, as may ſerve to make way for the recovering of them out of errour. As for example ſake: If wee ſhould meet with a zealous Papiſt that never underſtood the truth of our profeſſion: but is an adverſary to it upon miſinformation of his Prieſt, his parents, acquaintance, as that our religion is meere novelliſme, carnall, licentious &c. We ought ſo farre to abſtaine from our lawfull liberty, or to pleaſe him in a thing lawfull which he affects, as in our apprehenſion we conceive may make way to our

our reducing him into the right way. And this I find agreable to the Apoſtles reſolution. 1. *Cor.* 9. 19. 20. 21. 22. *Though I bee free from all men, yet have I made my ſelfe ſervant unto all, that I might gaine the more. And unto the Iewes I became as a Iew, that I might gain the Iewes: to them that are under the the law as under the law, that I might gaine them that are under the law. To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Chriſt) that I might gaine them that are without law: To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak.*

I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means ſave ſome. Lively exemplifications of which profeſſions were his practiſe of taking a vow on him related *Act.* 21. of his forbearing his power, 1. *Cor.* 9. 18. 1. *Theſſ.* 2. 6. 9. wherein he did not ſhew hypocriticall policy, like thoſe that *Proteus*-like can transform themſelves into any ſhape for evill purpoſes: *but ſerpentine wiſdome joyned with dove-like innocency*, commended by our Saviour *Mat.* 10. 16. the end being not his own advantage but the ſalvation of others. 3. Some are adverſaries to the truth out of malice, being ſet-

led therein, by love of unrighteouſneſſe, and hatred of righteouſneſſe. The converting of theſe being in a ſort deſperate, the ſcandalizing of them by the uſe of our liberty is not to bee regarded. Our Saviours example *Mat.*15.14. is a ſufficient rule to direct us in this caſe. When the *Phariſees* were offended becauſe of his doctrine, that that which *goeth into the mouth defiles not a man*, our Saviour bids *let them alone*; ſith they are wilfull, and incurable, *Let them fall into the ditch.* Tis true wee are bound by Gods law not willingly to provoke any to anger, much leſſe

lesse to provoke any greater sinne in him: but rather to avoyde such things as may cause these evills. But when we meet with such enemies as being wholly possessed by Satan, are setled in their enmity against us, and the truth we professe: wee then are to be carelesse of offending them by enjoying our conveniency, as knowing that our restraint may be uncomfortable to us and unprofitable to them.

§. 10. Que. 3. *Whether strong ones are obnoxious to such scandall.*

A third question may be: whether stroug ones may bee scandalized by the use of Christian liberty? *Aquin.* 2ª, 2æ, *q.* 43. *art.* 5. propoundes this question, *whether passive*

ſcandall may befall the perfect, and hee denies it, alleaging a ſayng of S. *Hierome, majores ſcandala non patiuntur: Thoſe that are ſtronger ſuffer not ſcãdals.* But I conceive ther's need of a fuller anſwer. That the ſtrongeſt may bee tempted by ſcandall is no queſtion. Our Saviour was tempted by a ſcandalous advice of *Peter* to forſake the worke which he had received from his Father, and for which he came into the world. That men of great ſtrength for knowledge, and godlines, may bee overcome by ſcandall, the falls of *David*, *Solomon*, and others ſhew. The beſt ſtrength of

a Chriſtian is but weakeneſſe without a continued ſupply of ſtrength from above. But concerninga ſcandall from the uſe of Chriſtian liberty it may either ariſe from an evill will, jealouſie, prejudice, whereby the mind prepoſſeſſed is offended with that wch another doth: or elſe it may ariſe from ignorance of the lawfulnes of ſuch liberty. Scandall proceeding from the former motives may bee in them that are ſtrong in knowledge, or in the faith. Evill will or evill prejudice may cauſe ſuch a one to miſinterpret another mans action, and to take offence thereat. But this

offence comes *à malo ingenio, from an ill mind in him*, wanting charity and wiſdome, & therefore he is in true eſtimation the ſcandalizer of himſelfe. As for ſcandall of the latter ſort from ignorance the ſtrong are not liable to it. For if a man be ſtrong he is ſufficiently inſtructed in the truth of our liberty, and therefore miſtakes it not, nor excepts againſt it.

§ 11. Que. 4. *Who are to be accounted weake ones not to be thus ſcandalized?*

A fourth queſtion may be: who are to be accounted weak brethren whom we may not ſcandalize by the uſe of our Chriſtian liberty? I anſwer: In the Apoſtles reaſonings in the chapters before abridged, thoſe are reputed

ted weake brethren who either becauſe of their late converſion had not time to learn the doctrine of chriſtian liberty, or otherwiſe for want of right information knew it not. It is the ſpeech of Dr *Ames l.* 5. *de conſci. c.* 11. §. 14. *puſilli habendi ſunt illi qui non ſunt ſufficienter inſtituti circa libertatem noſtram*: *They are to be accounted little or weak-ones, who are not ſufficiently inſtructed about our liberty*. And for this hee cites 1. *Cor.* 8. 7. And indeed in that place the Apoſtle oppoſeth the ſtrong to them that have not knowledge. Whence it followes that thoſe that

have been taught the doctrine of Chriſtian liberty, and yet are offended are not the weake ones of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks. For if after inſtruction they ſtill ſtumble it hath more of wilfulnes in it thē of weakneſſe, if they may be ſaid to be weak, yet not meerly weak, becauſe their ignorance is either from negligence, or averſneſſe of minde, and ſo is ignorance affected, or weaknes *ex prava diſpoſitione, out of an ill diſpoſition.* Dr *Ames, ubi ſupra,* §. 15. tels us *they may be accounted weake to whom the reaſon of our liberty hath bin rendred. For they may be not capeable of conceiving.* Which ſpeech

of

of his hath need of further conſideration. For the incapacity he ſpeakes of may bee conceived to be either from weakneſſe of naturall parts of underſtanding: And indeed ſuch incapacity may make men weake notwithſtanding inſtruction: but then it is not to bee imagined, but that they which have naturall parts ſufficient to conceive the myſteries of faith, have naturall parts ſufficient to conceive the doctrine of the lawfulneſſe of chriſtian liberty: if they can underſtand the one, they may underſtand the other: if they underſtand neither, they may bee termed more rightly

infidels, then weake in faith; blind, then dimme-ſighted: or elſe ſuch incapacity as he ſpeaks of may ariſe out of preconceived opinions, alienation of mind, prejudice againſt the teacher, *& ſtudio partium, from an addictednes to ſome peculiar party*, or frō ſuch other cauſe. For ſuch motes or beames rather in mens eyes will marre their ſight of that which they ſhould perceive, and ſo make them uncapeable for the time of diſcerning that which is right. But then it is to bee conſidered, that this incapacity is vitious and voluntary, at leaſt *ratione cauſæ: in reſpect of the cauſe of it*, and there-

therefore ſuch perſons are not to be reputed ſuch weak ones as the Apoſtle ſpeakes of, who were ſimple hearted, not wilfull, whereas theſe are rather wilfull then weake, and have more in them of evill will, than of little wit. And this may bee knowne by ſundry ſignes of their perverſeneſſe. As namely by unwillingnes to be taught in the truth of chriſtian liberty contrary to their opinions: deſpiſing all that is ſaid or written to cleare that truth, which is againſt their minds: declining the hearing or reading of that which is ſaid for it, or hearing and reading une-

unequally, not weighing or conſidering the one, but with raſhneſſe continuing in the former, perverting, miſconſtruing, miſreporting, that which is written or ſpoken, keeping in the ſame time after ſuch declaration as might convince, wrangling, and cenſuring, & quarrelling with thoſe that vary from them, zeale for their own opinion, reſolution even to ſuffering for their way. By which and ſuch like ſignes mens wilfull weakneſſe may bee diſcerned from ſimple ignorance.

§ 12. *Qu. 5. what evill conſequent on our action makes ſcandalizing of this ſort.*

A fift queſtion may be, what effect upon the uſe of our liberty, either conſequent or likely to be conſequent

conſequent, is neceſſary to make the uſe of our liberty a Scandalizing of our brother? In anſwer whereto it is needfull that that be remẽbred which I declared before *Ch.* 2. §. 4. in the explication of the definition of Scandall, to wit, that *ruine* or falling which is made the adequate effect of ſcandall, muſt be underſtood both in a primary, and a ſecondary ſenſe, and that the action cauſing either ſorte of *ruine* may be called ſcandall; ſo that if by the uſe of our liberty, we either draw our brother to ſpeciall ſinne, as by eating meats offered to Idolls, to be partakers of

Idoll

Idoll-ſervice, or hinder them in their progreſſe of grace, or cauſe them to fall away, or cauſe diſcords, ſchiſmes, alienation of affections, it is ſcandall. For any of theſe effects are ſufficient to make our brother ſtumble, offend or be weake, which are forbidden by the Apoſtle as the effects of Scandalizing *Rom.* 14. 21. Whereto we are to adde, that it is plaine by the 15. verſe, that the grieving of our brother by our eating is a ſcandalizing, though as I ſaid before, in a ſecondary acception. In that ſpeech of *Abigail* to *David*, 1. *Sam.* 25. 31. that which our Tranſla-

Tranſlators read [*griefe of heart*] is if the Heb. סכ־לב שורל, ſcandal or ſtũbling of heart. But if there be any other effect unpleaſing, as ſimple diſlike by diſſent in opiniõ without griefe I finde not that ſuch effect is ſufficient for the denomination of a ſcandall. For the Apoſtle doth not ſpeak of that effect in the places where he treats of ſcandalizing: nor doth it produce any hurt to our brother, unleſſe it proceed to ſome further evill. So that if a Chriſtian ſhould doe that, as ſuppoſe weare ſuch faſhion of cloaths, which his brother hath an opinion that it is not convenient

ent or lawfull, and therefore diſlikes it, yet becauſe the thing is doubtfull, wiſely keeps himſelfe from mourning for it, cenſuring him, with drawing affection and communion from him, I think ſuch a Chriſtian ſhould not by wearing of that faſhion be ſaid to ſcandalize his brother. But if through weakneſſe he be grieved at it, then it is ſcandalizing of him that is ſo grieved.

§. 13. Que. 6. *How long we are to forbear our liberty for feare of ſcandall.*

A ſixth queſtion may be: how long we are to forbeare the uſe of our liberty for feare of ſcandall? Anſw. *Aqu.* 2ª 2æ *qu.* 43. *art.* 7. reſolves that the Scandall of weak ones is

is to be avoided *quouſq; reddita ratione ſcandalum ceſſet. ſi autem poſt redditam rationem hujuſmodi ſcandalum duret jam videtur ex malitia eſſe*, that is, *untill a reaſon being rendred the ſcandall may ceaſe.* But if after a reaſon given ſuch a ſcandall continue, it then ſeemes to be of malice. *Peter Martyr loc. com. claſſ. 2. c. 24. Imoneq; ſemper in ipſis mediis rebus &c. yet we may not alwaies yeeld unto the weak in things indifferent, but only untill they be more perfectly taught: but when they have underſtood, and yet ſtill ſtand in doubt, their infirmity is not to be borne. Bucan. loc. com. 33. quæſt.*

quæſt. 14. *Rerum mediarum uſum ad proximi adhuc ex ignorantia infirmi, & in Chriſti Schola puſilli, captum moderemur, idq; tantiſper dum rudes iſti poſſunt erudiri: we ought to moderate our uſe of things indifferent to the capacity of our neighbour as yet weak by ignorance, and a litle one in the Schoole of Chriſt, and that ſo long untill ſuch ignorant perſons may be inſtructed.* The reaſon of which reſolution is, becauſe after inſtruction in true interpretation of reaſon, as I ſaid before in anſwer to the fourth queſtion, they that are ſcandalized are accounted rather wilfull then

then weake, and therefore not to bee regarded. Whereto I adde that unleſſe wee pitch here, there can be no certain rule given when men are weake, when froward: when we muſt forbeare our liberty, when we may uſe it. Yet by inſtruction, or giving a reaſon, I mean not a meere Magiſteriall avowing of our liberty, much leſſe a jeſting at the weakneſſe of him that doubts of it, but an humble, loving, and ſolid manifeſtation of it, to the underſtanding of the weake.

§. 14. Que. 7. *What foreſight of ſcandall conſequent is neceſſary to make a man culpable of ſcandalizing this way.*

A ſeaventh queſtion may be: whether that a man may be guilty of ſinfull

full ſcandall in the uſe of his liberty, it be not requiſite that he ſhould have ſome foreſight, or preconceite of it, or at leaſt ſuch particular advertiſement of the ſcandall conſequent, as if he had heeded it he might have prevented the ſcandall? *Anſ.* Whereto I anſwere, that if a man uſe his liberty, and ſuch ſcandall follow as he did neither foreſee, nor imagine would follow, nor had any advertiſement of it fit to foremind him of it, ſin is not to be laid to his charge in reſpect of ſuch unexpected and unthought of ſcandall. In this caſe it may be *infortunium non pec-*

peccatum, his miſhap that his action ſhould occaſion anothers hurt, but not his ſinne, to whom the ſcandall was by no default of his, no defect of charity, but by meere neſcience in a ſort unavoidable. This anſwer may be gathered from the Apoſtles reſolution, 1. *Cor.* 10. 27. 28. In which the Apoſtle tells the Corinthians, *that if any of thē that believe not ſhould bid them to a feaſt, and they were diſpoſed to goe, they might eate whatſoever was ſet before them, asking no queſtion for conſcience ſake. But if any man ſhould ſay to them. This is offered in ſacrifice to Idols, they*

they were not to eate, for his ſake that ſhewed it, and for conſcience ſake, yet not his owne conſcience, for he might uſe his liberty in reſpect of his own conſcience, who knew the meat offered to the Idoll, to bee ſtill nevertheleſſe Gods creature, *whoſe the earth is and the fulneſſe thereof*; but the others conſcience, who was ready to conceive ſome honour given to the Idoll by eating the Idolothyte. Now from hence it is plain, that if there had bin none to give notice of the exception of the weake, there would have been no ſin in him that had eaten though offence had fol-

followed, which argues that then a man onely is guilty of ſin in the ſcandall conſequent on the uſe of his liberty, when he hath had fore-notice thereof. Adde hereto that the ſcandalizing of weak brethren reprehēded *Ro.* 14. *is called a deſpiſing, or ſetting at nought of a brother, ver.* 3. 10. which implies manifeſt knowledge, that the weake were apt to bee grieved by the ſtrong ones eating of meats: yea in reaſon, and agreeably to the caſes reſolved. *Rom.* 14. 1. *Cor.* 8. & 10. ch. it's not a mans ſin unleſſe he know the futurition of the ſcandall with ſome morall certainty

ty, ſo that if it fall out though we conceive it not likely it would, our Conſciences need not to be troubled for that accident: becauſe however factes done by ignorance of thoſe precepts which God hath enjoyned are ſinnes: yet contingent events not foreſeene by us, cannot make thoſe facts of ours which are otherwiſe lawfull, to become ſinfull though the event be harmefull. God who hath tied us to know his will which he hath enjoyned us, hath not tied us to know theſe accidents, which *caliginoſa nocte premit, he reſerves in his own breaſt.* As it is in

in ſlaying by meere chance mentioned *Deut.* 19.5. the killing of a man is a grievous misfortune, and in that reſpect to be lamented, but not a ſinne, nor in that reſpect be repented: ſo in like manner ſuch *caſuall ſcandall* (as I may ſo call it) is to be bewailed as a miſhap, but not to be mourned for as a ſinne.

§. 15. Que. 8. *Whether the reſtraint of our liberty for feare of ſcandall be univerſall.*

An eight queſtion may be: whether the reſtraint of uſing our liberty by reaſon of ſcandall be univerſall? *Anſ.* No: ſcandall upon the uſe of our liberty, reſtraines us only *hic & nunc*: *in this place at this time*: it doeth not take away, but ſuſpend

the uſe of our liberty. So that though a man may not uſe his liberty where and when there are perſons apt to be ſcandalized: yet he may where & when there are none, or he knowes of none that are apt to be ſcandalized. In ſuch caſes the reaſon of the reſtraint ceaſing, the reſtraint ceaſeth. And this is agreeable to the Apoſtles determination 1. *Cor.* 10.27.28. reſolving that a man that might not eate meate offered to an Idoll, when it was ſhewed him by another that it was an Idolothyte, had yet his liberty of his own conſcience entire: which were not true if he might eate

eate at no time ſuch meat, becauſe he might not eate it at that time. To conceive otherwiſe inferres this abſurdity, that the likelyhood, or accident of one ſcandall utterly extinguiſheth his gratious Charter of Chriſtian liberty in that thing by which he was or might be once a ſcandalizer.

§. 16. Que. 9. *Whether ſcandall may be by omiſſion of the uſe of our liberty.*

A ninth queſtion may be: whether there may be ſcandall by omiſſion of the uſe of our liberty in a thing indifferent? *Anſ.* Omiſſion I oppoſe here to poſitive action. As for inſtance, eating meats allowed by God is a poſitive action, and the uſe of our liberty: not eating

that which we might is a privation and omiſſion of the uſe of our liberty. Now that a man may be guilty of ſinfull ſcandall by the omiſſion of a duty I determined before, c. 3. §. 3. To which I adde that ſith the lawfull Magiſtrate hath power about indifferent things to reſtraine, or require our uſe of our liberty for the publique good, and we are bound to make conſcience of obeying ſuch cõmands, not for the things ſake ſo commanded, for that is in it ſelfe indifferent, but by reaſon of the authority to which God hath made us ſubject, and the end for which ſuch orders

orders are eſtabliſhed, which all members of a common-wealth ought to ſeeke: therefore the omiſſion of doing ſuch things commanded is an omiſſion of a duty (*rebus ſic poſitis*) and the ſcandall conſequent upon it, a ſcandall of the firſt ſort, to wit of ſinfull example. Moreover for a punctuall anſwer to the preſent queſtion, I conceive that there may be ſcandall by the forbearing the uſe of our liberty, when that forbearing though otherwiſe lawfull, occaſions men to conceive ſome alienation of affection, ſome evill intentions, ſome ſuperſtition, or the

like evill in them who doe forbeare it, our Saviour *Math.* 17. 27. would have tribute mony paid for himſelfe, & *Peter*, though he were free, and that becauſe the not-paying would offend them. S. *Peters* not-eating with the Gentiles was a ſcandall to *Barnabas Gal.* 2. 13. Frequent experience confirmes it that the forbearing of ſome actions which are in their kind indifferent, at ſome times doth grieve weak brethren, and offend others, when they are apt to conceive ſuch forbearance to ariſe out of a malevolent minde, ſuperſtitious opinion, humour of ſingularity,

rity, contempt of others, or the like cauſe.

§. 17. Que. 10. *Whether a community or a magiſtrate may be ſcandalized.*

A tenth queſtion may be: whether a community, a nation, the publique Magiſtrate may be ſcandalized? *Anſ.* The uſe of excommunicatiõ preſuppoſeth that ſcandall may be of the whole Church by ſinfull actions of one member. Yea further it is determined *art.* 34. of the Church of England. *Whoſoever through his private judgement willingly and purpoſely doth openly breake the traditions, and ceremonies of the Church, which bee not repugnant to the word of God, and be approved, and ordained by com-*

mon authority ought to be rebuked openly (that other may feare to doe the like) as he that offendeth againſt the common order of the Church, and woundeth the conſcienees of the weak brethren. Moreover experience ſhewes that whole nations or ſocieties are ſometimes offended with thoſe who obſerve not their cuſtomes, or orders, which are in their uſe indifferent, and not confirmed by any publique ordinance, but by uſe only received: and that ſuch varying from them occaſions anger, enmity, and ſuch like evills.

§ 18. Duc. 11. *What we are to doe where there is danger of ſcandall one way and of diſobedience to the Magiſtrate another way.*

An eleventh queſtion may be: Whether ſith the Magiſtrates

Magiſtrates authority is one way of reſtraining or requiring the uſe of our liberty, and the danger of ſcandall another, upon ſuppoſition, that the lawfull Magiſtrate cõmands the doing or omitting of that which is indifferent, & on the other ſide there is danger of ſcandalizing, the queſtion is which of theſe reſpects I am to be ruled by? *Anſ.* There is no doubt, but that a good and wiſe Magiſtrate will remit in many caſes the rigour of diſcipline to avoide ſcandall, as I ſaid before §. 4. As the love-feaſts, kiſſe of peace, vigils at the tombes of *Martyrs*, and other orders of the

Church were in processe of time evacuated, when they occasioned scandall. But if the Magistrate doe not suspend his cõmands, then it is a hard case. For either on the one side there is danger of nullifying the power of the Magistrate, or on the other side of wounding or destroying our brother. Possibly it may so fall out that a mans cõscience may without much difficulty winde it selfe out of this streight, by finding some circumstances prepõderating either one way or other. As for ininstance, if the Magistrats command bee about a matter of great conse-

quence

quence, for the ſafety of the Common-wealth, to avoid a preſent evill: or if it be in a ſmaller matter if urged peremptorily, & vehemently, on the other ſide the effect of the ſcandall be not likely to bee plain Apoſtacy, or the like great ſinne, but ſome grievance of mind, or diſcontent of the party ſcandalized, it is without doubt that then the Magiſtrates command is to be performed. On the contrary, if the Magiſtrates command be in a ſmaller matter, not bringing any great evil, nor likely to infringe the power of authority though the command be not followed

lowed, if it be not peremptorily, and ſtrictly, but remiſſely urged: on the other ſide, the effect of ſcandall of the greateſt ſort of evills, very probable, and in a manner preſent, giving no time to finde a way to redreſſe it, then in this caſe the danger of ſcandall may prevaile for that time. But if we make the ſcales even: and propound the caſe thus: what if the danger of ſcandall be great, and manifeſt, on the one ſide, and the Magiſtrate peremptory in his command, and the thing commanded of great moment on the other ſide, the doubt is, whether of theſe

two

two is to bee regarded? I determine that the Magiſtrates command ſhould in this caſe ſway our conſciences: and that for theſe reaſons following. 1. Becauſe by the Magiſtrates command the thing required is made a neceſſary duty though in it ſelfe indifferent. For the command that ties *every ſoule to bee ſubject to the higher powers, Rom.* 13.1. requires obedience to them, which is the chiefeſt part of ſubjection. And this obligation of obedience is antecedent to the conſideration of the ſcandall. For the ſanction of the law precedes the accident of ſcandall. Now in

in things that are our duties wee muſt not omit them, or neglect them for feare of ſcandals. Therefore the Magiſtrates command in the caſe propounded is not to be neglected for feare of ſcandall. Againſt this argument Dr *Ames. lib. 5. de conſci. c. 11. §. 16.* ſeems to except in theſe words: *Nulla authoritas humana &c. No authority of man can either take away the nature of ſcandall from that which otherwiſe ſhould bee ſcandall, or the nature of ſinne from ſcandall given. For no man can command our charity and conſciences. Vel periculum ſcandali dati præſtare*, which I render thus,

thus, *or countervaile, or be preferred before the danger of ſcandall given.* Where-to I reply that it is not true that the lawfull authority of the Magiſtrate may not in things indifferẽt make the doing of that action not to bee a ſcandall given, which otherwiſe might bee. For if it may make the thing commanded a duty by vertue of the command, the ſcandall conſequent will bee paſſive, or taken; not active, or given. As we determine of preaching, and many other duties that they are to bee done though ſcandall follow: ſo we are to ſay of obedience to the Magiſtrate in that

that wherein God hath made us ſubject to him wee are to obey him, though ſcandall follow. If it bee ſaid that preaching is a duty immediately enjoyned by God, the doing of that which the Magiſtrate commands only mediately: I anſwer. Though it bee true that for this reaſon the thing which the Magiſtrate commands is not ſo ſtrictly our duty, as that which God commands: the Magiſtrates commands belonging only to his owne ſubjects, Gods commands to all: the Magiſtrates conſtitutions binding us only in reference to a ſuperiour authority, and

a ſuperiour end, the publique good, and therefore when they are contrary to the law of God, or nature, when there is ſome preſſing neceſſity that cannot bee avoyded by reaſon of which wee cannot doe the thing commanded, if the neceſſity bee true, and not fained, and the not-doing of the Magſtrates command be without contempt of authority, or ill example to others, or if the thing commanded ſhould be in truth plainely contrary to the publique good, as it may happen ſometimes ſome commands may, if ſtrictly urged, κατὰ τὸ ῥητὸν *according to the letter*, But Gods

Gods commands binde abſolutely, without limitation. I ſay though for theſe reaſons the thing which the Magiſtrate commands be not our duty ſo ſtrictly as that which God immediately commands: yet when it is a duty (as it is when it oppoſeth not Gods law, the law of nature, or the publique ſafety) there is a neceſſity of obeying the command of the Magiſtrate, as of obeying Gods immediate precepts: nor may the one bee omitted to avoyde ſcandall any more then the other. As for that which is ſaid *that the Magiſtrate cannot reſtraine our charity*. 'Tis true:

true: for charity is an inward affection of the ſoule, which none but God can command, as none but hee can ſearch, and puniſh, yet the Magiſtrate may reſtraine the ſhewing of our charity ſomewayes, as in forbidding to relieve malefactors, rebels, vagrants &c. ſo that hee ſhould ſin that ſhould preferre ſuch a worke of charity, before a worke of obedience to the governour, which is a worke of piety to a publique perſon, and the Father of the countrey: whereas the other is to a private perſon of common reſpect. But *the Magiſtrate cannot command*

our

our conſciences. Anſw. *That the commands of men doe in no ſort bind the conſcience, cannot bee ſaid without contradicting of* S. *Paul. Rom.* 13. 5. *Ye muſt needes bee ſubject not onely for wrath, but alſo for conſcience ſake:* They that ſay leaſt for governours, ſay they may by their lawes binde the conſcience mediately, and by vertue of Gods precept, although not immediately and of themſelves. Now this is enough to prove that it is the duty of Chriſtians to doe the lawful commands of the Magiſtrate. As for that which is ſaid *that the danger of ſcandall is before the diſobedience to the commands*

mands of men. I ſuppoſe not: for the evill by diſobeying of the Magiſtrate is as certaine, if not more certaine then the evill of ſcandall, the evill of ſcandall more remediable then the evill that followes on the diſobeying the Magiſtrates command: for the one is likely onely ſome tranſeunt harme in the mind or conſcience of the ſcandalized perſon, the other a conſtant permanent harme in the common wealth, ſuch as many times overthrowes government, and in fine diſſolveth a commonwealth: the one uſually extends to few, the other to the whole community. And it

it is taken for a plain truth. *Præſtat ut pereat unus, quam unitas.* Or as *Caiaphas* once ſaid, *It is expedient that one ſhould dye for the people, and that the whole nation periſh not. Io.* 11. 52. Adde hereto that there is a ſcandalizing of the publique Magiſtrate and others by diſobedience, as §. 17. was determined, which is as regardable as well as the ſcandalizing of private perſons, unleſſe too much partiall reſpect ſway men, that they will not judge righteous judgement. 2. I argue thus, If it be not determined that the obeying of the Magiſtrates command were to bee preferred

red before the declining of ſcandall, that may happen by ſuch obedience, then it will follow that both the Magiſtrate is bound to revoke or ſuſpend his lawes, when there is likely-hood of ſcandall to follow. For he is not to urge men to doe that which is evill; Now this would make all governours that make conſcience of their commands almoſt perpetually uncertaine, whether they may command any thing or no: or make their conſtitutions invalid, ſith they can ſeldome make any orders, but that ſcandals will ariſe, as experience in all ages hath proved. And

ſubjects

ſubjects alſo ſhall have power to neglect ſuch conſtitutions, and ſo to make them as no lawes in the ſame caſe. The conſequent of which being granted, I ſuppoſe can bee no leſſe then *Anarchy*, and confuſion. The miſchiefe of which is greater then I can expreſſe, and ſuch as the avoyding of ſcandalizing of ſome ſoules cannot countervaile: wherefore as it is ſaid in the caſe of exacting an oath of a perſō, that (it's likely) will forſweare himſelfe. *Fiat juſtitia & ruat cælum. Let juſtice proceed, though the heaven fall:* ſo ſay I, let goverment ſtand though ſubjects bee ſcandalized.

3. Laſtly

3. Laſtly, If a man in doing any lawfull thing make it knowne that hee muſt doe it by reaſon of the command of authority, or it bee otherwiſe manifeſt that that is indeed the reaſon of his doing, ſurely he that is offended is rather unrighteous, and evill minded, then weake, that will think that lawes muſt bee broken to pleaſe him: and therefore the ſcandalizing of ſuch not regardable.

§. 19. *Que.* 12. *What we are to doe in caſe of ſcandall, either by uſing or not uſing our liberty?*

A twelfth queſtion may be: If it fall out that in the doing or omitting of a thing indifferent ſome will bee ſcandalized if it be done, others if omitted, ſome offended if it be

done this way, ſome offe-ded if not done this way, ſo that there is apparent danger of ſcandall either way, what is to be done in ſuch a caſe? *Anſ. D. Ames. l. 5. de conſcientia. c. 11. §. 18.* denies the caſe and ſayes, *nulla datur talis perplexitas, ut neceſsarium ſit pio homini ſive hoc vel illud faciat, ſive non faciat ſcandalum alicui dare: There can bee no ſuch perplexity, that it ſhould bee neceſsary for a godly man, whether he doe this or that or not doe it to ſcandalize ſome one.* Which aſſertion of his is both againſt experience, and reaſon. Againſt experience: For the contrary fell out in S. *Peters*

ters caſe, *Gal.* 2. 12. in which it is plaine in the carriage of that matter, that if he did eat with the Gentiles he was in danger of ſcandalizing the Iewes, if hee did not eate with them to ſcandalize the Gentiles. And it falls out too frequently in our own dayes, that in the uſe of ſome rites in themſelves indifferent, ſome are offended with the uſe of them as *Popiſh*, ſome with the not uſing them as arguing the affectation of Novelliſme and ſingularity: Againſt reaſon. For ſith ſcandall ariſeth from the opinion that is had of a thing indifferent, when the action of him that of-

fendeth daſheth againſt it, and it is undoubted that even godly men, may have oppoſite opinions of things indifferent, one thinking them fit, another unfit: one thinking them needfull, another evill, it is plaine in reaſon that it may ſo fall out that the doing or not doing of ſomthing indifferent may croſſe the one or the other of the oppoſite opinions, and ſo ſcandalize either the one or the other. The reſolution of *Calvin, Epiſt.* 379. is right and good, that a ſcandall of a few muſt not ſway us in a thing not repugnant to Gods word. *Vbi major numerus pervincit*, where the

the greater part is on the cõtrary, no not though it draw an evil conſequence after it.

And in like manner may it be ſaid, *ubi potior numerus pervincit, where the better part is on the contrary*, as the governor, the moſt wiſe, learned, and faithfull Chriſtians. Likewiſe conſideration ſhould be had to offend thoſe rather whoſe offence is eaſier remedied, or the conſequẽce of their ſcandall leſſe pernitious, then thoſe whoſe offence is more hardly redreſſed, or the conſequence of their ſcandall more pernitious. For in ſuch caſes prudence muſt rule our conſciences to reſpect primarily the more conſiderable par, &

to avoyd the more dangerous conſequences.

§.20. Que. 13. *What we are to doe, when the forbearing of our liberty endangers the loſſe of it.*

A thirteenth queſtion may be: It may ſo fall out that either by the frequent, or incommodious forbearing of the uſe of our liberty at ſome time, our lawfull liberty may be ſo indangered, that an opinion may thereby be ſetled as if it were unlawfull ſimply, which we forbeare onely by reaſon of the feare of ſcandall, or as if it were neceſſary which wee onely doe to avoyde ſcandall, what is a chriſtian to doe in this caſe? *Anſw.* The example of S. *Paul* is commonly by Divines produced as a reſolution of this queſtion.

We

We read *Acts.16.3.* that *Paul* tooke and circumciſed *Timothy* to avoyd the offence of the Iewes though the law of circumciſion, and other legall ceremonies were then aboliſhed: and hee had liberty to omit it. But hee tells us *Gal.2.3.4.* that *Titus was not compelled to be circumciſed, and that becauſe of falſe brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to ſpye out our liberty, which we have in Chriſt Ieſus, that they might bring us into bondage.* To whom ſaith he: *v.5. We gave place by ſubjection no not for an houre, that the truth of the Goſpell might continue with*

them. While the liberty of uncircumciſion was unchallenged he did with ſecurity circumciſe *Timothy* to avoyde offence: but when the truth of chriſtian liberty was challenged and endangered he would not yeild to doe the ſame to *Titus*. From which practiſe avouched by S. *Paul*, and therefore propounded by the holy Ghoſt as imitable by us, this rule may bee ſafely inferred: that when by uſe or diſuſe of our liberty, the truth of our liberty is in danger to be impeached, wee are then rather to put our ſelves on the hazard of ſcandall, then to looſe our liberty it ſelfe.

ſelfe. For it is a more pretious thing not to have our conſciences in bondage or the truth impaired, then can be countervailed by the pleaſing of ſome men. Truth is an unvalluble Iewell, which wee are not to forfeit to win mens affections. *Præſtat ut ſcandalum admittatur, quam veritas amittatur:* is the approved rule of S. *Auguſtine. Better admit ſcandall then looſe truth.*

§. 21. Que. 14. *What are we to doe when there is danger of life by not uſing our liberty, of ſcandall by uſing it?*

A fourteenth queſtion may be: whether if on the one ſide our life ſhould be indangered by forbearing the uſe of our liberty, and on the other ſide there be likely-hood of ſcandall if we uſe it, is our liberty to

bee uſed to ſave our lives, or to be forborn to avoyd ſcandall? *Anſw.* It is a rule received, which *Aqu.* 2ª, 2æ, *qu.* 43. *art.* 7. cites as out of S. *Hicrome*, *that that which may be omitted, Salvâ triplici veritate ſcil. vitæ, juſtitiæ, & doctrinæ, a threefold truth of life, righteouſneſſe and doctrine being preſerved, ought to be omitted to avoyde ſcandall.* According to which exception it followes that wee are not to omit our liberty when our life is endangered. And there is plain reaſon for it, from the precedency of our ſelves among the objects of charity before others: wee are to love others as our

our ſelves, not afore our ſelves. 2. In reſpect of the greatneſſe of the danger of looſing our life above the danger of ſcandall. For, 1. the danger of looſing life may be more certain in forbearing our liberty, when naturall neceſſity requires us to uſe it, then the event of ſcandall can be, depending on the changeable mind and will of man. 2. The evill of looſing life is plainely remedileſſe: life loſt cannot be recovered by man: but the evill of ſcandall is not *ſimpliciter irremediabile*, ſimply remedileſſe, but that inſtruction, adviſe, example, prayers may by Gods bleſſing reſtore the

the perſon ſcandalized. If it were ſo that it were revealed by God that by uſing my liberty to ſave my naturall life, I ſhould inevitably caſt my brother into everlaſting fire, ſurely charity bindes mee to looſe my life rather then to damne my brother. But this no man doth by uſing his liberty, at leaſt God reveales no ſuch thing. But what means the Apoſtle then 1. *Cor.* 8. 13. when hee ſaith; *If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no fleſh while the world ſtandeth, leaſt I make my brother to offend?* I anſwer: The Apoſtles reſolution is not to abandon *all meat*

and

and dye to avoyd offence: but to eat no fleſh, without which he might live. And accordingly wee are to forbeare our conveniences, and priviledges which ſerve us *ad benè eſſe to our well-being*: but not our lives or lively-hood that is neceſſary *ad eſſe, ſimpliciter, that wee may have a being.*

§. 22. Que. 15. *What we are to doe when there is feare of ſcandall to ſome and hope of good to others by uſe of our liberty.*

A fifteenth queſtion may be: whether if there appear danger of ſcandal to ſome in uſing our liberty, and likely-hood of oppoſite good to others by uſing it, we are to forbeare it? *Anſ.* No: For in this caſe the uſe of our liberty to that end is a duty, as being a greater exerciſe of charity,

ty, the ſcandall being not remedileſſe, unleſſe by reaſon of a perverſe mind: which kind of ſcandall is not to be regarded.

§ 23. *Que.* 16. *How farre we are to regarde the Scandal that ariſeth from fancy without any probable reaſon?*

A ſixteenth queſtion may be: whether wee are bound to forbeare the uſe of our liberty to avoyde the ſcandall of our weake brother offended with our action as concciving it evill without any probable ground? *Anſw.* I thinke not. For there was probable ground of the evill of eating the *Idolothytes* 1. *Cor.* 8. and of the eating of the meates and neglect of dayes mentioned *Rom.* 14. And in reaſon, if a mans conceit without ſhew of reaſon on

meere

meere fancy ſhall hinder me in the uſe of my liberty, my liberty is no liberty in effect. Beſides if hee conceive ill of my action without ſome probable reaſons moving him therto, his conceit is rather to be interpreted an effect of ſelfe-will, or ill will then of weakneſſe, and ſo not to be regarded: If it be objected, as frequently it is, that the Apoſtle 1. *Theſ.* 5.22. chargeth chriſtians thus ἀπὸ παντὸς εἴδους πονηροῦ ἀπέχεσθε. *Abſtaine from all appearance of evill*, and therefore wee are not to doe that which ſeemes to bee evill to another, whether upon probable reaſon or fancy though it be

be not in it ſelfe evill. I anſwere, 1. that εἶδος ſignifies the *ſort* or *kind* of things, anſwering to *genus* and *ſpecies*, as *Cicero* renders it, and that *Tremellius* out of the *Syriak* tranſlates it *ab omni voluntate malâ fugite, fly from all evill will*, that is, as he interprets it in the Marginall note, *negotio malo, ſive re malâ, evill buſineſſe, or evill thing*, ſo that it might be tranſlated, *abſtaine from every evill thing*, or *every ſort of evill*. 2. That though *Beza* with others read *ab omni ſpecie mali, from every appearance of evill*: and expound it not only of that which is evill in it ſelfe,

ſelfe, but alſo of *that which though not evill in it ſelfe, yet ſeems ſo to others:* yet more plainly according to the originall it is tranſlated by the vulgar and *Tigurine* tranſlators, *ab omni ſpecie mala, from every ſhew which is evill.* According to either of which readings this text will prove only that we are to avoide that which is an evill thing or appearance it ſelfe evill, and makes nothing to prove that we ought to abſtaine from a thing or appearance not evill but indifferent. 3. That *Chryſoſtome*, the Greeke Scholiaſt, and others apply it onely to falſe doctrines, or

or lies of falſe prophets. As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, Though you are not to quench the ſpirit, yet you are to try all doctrines, and to abſtaine from that which appears evill: which would be nothing to the abſtaining from the uſe of things indifferent, when they ſeem evill to another. 4. But let it be granted, that it is meant of evill appearance in reſpect of practiſe, yet it may be doubted whether the Apoſtle means it of that which appears evill to another or to a mans ſelfe? ſurely the *ſeries* of the text doth beſt ſuite with this interpretation. Abſtaine from that which

which appears to your ſelves to be evill: for having ſaid, *Try all things*, whether doctrines or practiſes, to direct thē what to doe he addes, *Holde that wich is good*, that is what you finde upon triall to be good, and *abſtaine from all evill appearance, or appearance of evill*, which ſo appears to you upon your triall. Which expoſition beſides that the words of *Calvin* in his Commentary imply he ſo conceived it, hath other learned men that approve it, and ſo farre as I ſee into the text ſeems to be moſt genuine. Now if this expoſition ſtand, it makes nothing for

for the abſtaining from the uſe of our lawfull liberty which appears evill to another, but from that doctrine or practiſe which appears to be evill to our ſelves, that we may not ſinne againſt the light of our own conſcience. Laſtly, if it were granted that the Apoſtle forbiddes us to abſtaine from all that which appears to be evill to another, yet no interpreter that I meet with underſtands it of ſuch *appearance of evill*, as is conceited to be ſuch upon ſome erroneous principles in him that conceives it to be ſuch, or by reaſon of the meere fancy, or rigid auſterity, or evill will,

or

or ſuch like cauſe of him that thinkes it evill: but they uſually apply it to ſuch cauſes or ſignes of maniſeſt evil as are means of drawing to ſome notorious ſinne, as going to heare a Maſſe, which is a cauſe and ſigne of Idolatry, or wanton dalliance which is a cauſe or ſigne of whoredome. And they apply hereto that ſaying of *Iulius Cæſar, that Cæſars wife ſhould be free not only from evill, but alſo from the ſuſpition of it.* So that even in their intent, this Scripture is not appliable to this purpoſe, as if the Apoſtle did prohibite a Chriſtian to uſe any thing that another thought

thought evill, whether he thought ſo upon probable reaſon, or no reaſon, upon ſome ground or none. And to ſpeak truth, the application of this text in that manner as it is by ſome, as if the Apoſtle did forbid us the uſe of any thing though indifferent in it ſelfe, when it appears as evill to another, without farther reſtraint, is very abſurd and ſo unreaſonable as that it will bring a yoake upon mens Conſciences impoſſible to be borne, ſith there is ſcarce any thing a man can doe, but ſome or other, Infidell or Chriſtian, weake or ſtrong in the faith, orthodoxe or ſuperſtitious

ſtitious will think it to be evil, that ſaying by experience being found true, *quot homines, tot ſententiæ*, ſo many men, ſo many mindes: nor ſhall a mans own conſcience only make a thing evill to him, but the conſcience of any other man in the world. Theſe are the moſt material queſtions which have occurred to mee. Which having finiſhed, I paſſe on to application & ſo to the concluding of this point.

§. 24. *Application 1. To manifeſt the uncharitablenes of ſcandalizers by abuſe of their liberty.*

Firſt then wee may hence perceive how evill and uncharitable their diſpoſitions are, who uſe their liberty in things lawfull without heeding of

of ſcandall, ſurely there are every where a great number of men of this temper, that will eate and drinke and play, & cloath themſelves, and doe innumerable other acts without the leaſt thought, or regard whether others be pleaſed or diſpleaſed, ſcādalized, perverted by their actions. Alas! ſaid I they will doe theſe things without reſpect of avoiding ſcandall? I might have added, there be not a few that make but a jeſt of ſcruples concerning ſcandall, yea that of ſet-purpoſe with delight doe ſuch things as they know will offend, that they may provoke and offend their brethren.

brethren. All ſuch perſons doe undoubtedly walke after their owne luſts, who neither for God nor for mans ſake deny themſelves any thing. It is manifeſt that it is their Luſt that rules them, not obedience to God, not charity to men, not adviſed reaſon: and it ſhewes a heart in them ready to doe unlawfull things for their luſt, who will doe lawfull things ſo unlawfully. My brerhren we are moſt apt to offend in things indifferent: it's eaſie to ſlip from the meane to ſome extreame or other; and ſo much the rather becauſe in ſuch things men uſually walke

not with much warineſſe; In things plainly evill, mens conſciences will eaſily checke and correct themſelves, becauſe the evill is ſo apparent: but in things indifferent, men fall into evill afore they are aware. Wherefore thoſe that are wiſe-hearted, and right-hearted chriſtians, will ſo much the more watch themſelves in the uſe of ſuch things: they are carefull neither to offend God, nor men, neither to abuſe their priviledges againſt Gods glory, nor their brethrens good; only men whoſe luſt is their law, will have their ſports, feaſts, faſhions, and the like

like things in themſelves lawfull, after their owne wills, though God be provoked, or their brethren damnified.

§. 25. 2. *To diſſwade them from this ſin, with directions againſt it.*

Wherefore it concerns us all to take heed of ſcandall in the uſe of our liberty in things indifferent: I meane of ſcandall both active and paſſive: And therefore this admonition is to be conceived as pertaining both to them that uſe their liberty, and them that may be offended with it. 1. Thoſe that are to uſe their liberty are to take heed that they marre not their good by evill-handling, to wit by uſing it to deſtruction, and not to edification of

their brethren. Our liberty is a great bleſſing of God: it is no ſmall benefit that we may have his creatures to uſe, that he hath made us under himſelfe Lords over the works of his hands: And though he require obedience of us, yet he hath given us a large ſcope in things after our owne wills, enough to ſatisfy us if we have any reaſon: we may eat this or that, weare this or that, dwell here or there, and a thouſand more ſuch things are left to our owne choice: But what then? Shall we grow petulant and wanton? Shall we be like an ungracious ſonne, who when

when his father hath put an eſtate in his hand, followes his owne pleaſure, regarding neither parents nor brethren? God forbid we ſhould thus requite the Lord! Nay rather it becomes us, as wee have all our priviledges from God, ſo to doe as a good child to a kinde father, a generous Favorite to a munificent *Prince*, even to lay all our gifts at the donours feet, to devote them all to his honour that gave them freely: to ſpend that for his ſervice which he hath ſo frankly endowed us with. It's to bee remembred that we are not Proprietaries, but Vſufructuaries of Gods

creatures : they are his goods ſtill, though put into our hands, to occupy: the earth *is ſtill the Lords and the fulnes thereof:* we may not ſay of it, *wee may doe with our owne as we liſt.* That wee ought to doe which the Apoſtle inferres hereupon, *Whether wee eat or drinke, or whatſoever we doe, doe all to the glory of God.* 1. Cor. 10. 31. Not forgetting our brethren, but as it is added *v.* 32. *giving none offence, neither to the Iewes, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God:* or as we are admoniſhed. *Gal.* 5. 13. *Though we are called to liberty, yet not to uſe our liberty for an occaſion*

to the fleſh: but by love to ſerve one another. It will be but a miſerable advantage to vs to vſe our liberty, ſo as to ſpurn at Gods honour, and to trample our brethrens good vnder our feete: to obſcure the luſtre of Gods glory, or to make gaſhes in our brothers conſcience. Shall a man becauſe he is ſtrong, kicke the weake under his feet? Shall a man uſe his owne happines no better, but to make others miſerable? No, no, (Brethren): Mercy, Iuſtice, Charity, our Calling, Chriſts example, all theſe and more then theſe ſhould teach us better, to ſeeke not our owne, but

one anothers wealth, to uſe our owne good, ſo as not to ſpoyle anothers peace. We are to remember, that as our Saviour ſaid, *we ſhould have the poore alwayes with us*, ſo it is true alſo, that we ſhall have the weake in faith alwayes with us, and therefore it will be a perpetuall duty, ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων Acts 20. 35. *to ſupport*, not to ſupplant *the weake*.--To this end, 1. get a tender, and compaſſionate love of thy brother in thy heart: thou art bound to love all men: but thy chriſtian brother chiefly. Let the love of Chriſt to thee, and him be thy patterne: *he would not*

not breake a bruiſed Reed, nor quench ſmoaking Flaxe: Iſai. 42.3. *He fed his flock like a ſheepheard: hee gathered the Lambes with his arme and carried them in his boſome, and gently led thoſe that were with young.* *Iſai.* 40. 11. Oh get ſuch a tender love, that yee may be as the Apoſtle requires, τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι Rom. 12. 10. *Inclined to tender affectionate kindneſſe one to another in brotherly love*, that thou maiſt communicate to them the warmth of thy boſome, that they may have heate by thee, and the kiſſing of thy mouth, that they may have de-

light by thee, and the ſtrength of thy armes, that they may have ſafety by thee, not be expoſed by thee to dangers, much leſſe bitten and devoured by thee: you are not borne for your ſelves: you have not your goods only to ſerve your owne turnes. *They are thy bone, and thy fleſh*, yea thy ſpirit too, if a chriſtian. If there be any excellency in thee: yet both are of the ſame kind: If thou differeſt from him, yet *who made thee to differ from him? Or what haſt thou that thou haſt not received?* Love him therefore and deſpiſe him not: bee tender over him, and not

not contemne him: 2. Get much prudence alſo to know the condition, inclination, minde of thy brother. Much charity may make us willing, but there muſt be much prudence alſo to make us able to avoyde ſcandalizing. There's ſuch variety of diſpoſitions, opinions, and conditions of men that it is no ſmall difficulty to avoyde ſcandalizing of ſome one or other. Nevertheleſſe if we doe what lyes in us, the Almighty will accept of the integrity of our hearts, and not impute to us our defects of imprudence.

And here I could heartily

tily wiſh that all chriſtians, eſpecially thoſe that are ſet apart for the miniſtery of the word, would take heed of one evill to which in theſe times men are very prone. I meane the teaching of many things to be evill, whoſe abuſe only is evill, not the things themſelves, For what ever bee the cauſe whether it bee facility of ſliding into extreames, or unskilfullneſſe to diſtinguiſh betweene the uſe and abuſe of things indifferent, or the debility that is in many to reaſon, and to gather right conſequences, or the preoccupating of mens minds with erroneous princi-

ples,

ples, or that ἀμετρία ἀνθολκῆς, as *St Basill* calls it, the immoderate drawing things to a contrary way, as to think that to be most right which seemes most contrary to *Popery*, prophanesse, or the vitiousnesse of the times, or the addictednesse that is in men to hold that which their affected teachers doe vent, or *studium partium, a desire to promote some party*, or to have, and to entertaine opinions peculiar to such a party as a Cognizance for them to be discerned by from others, or an affectation of singular opinions, I say what ever bee the cause the great Charter of

of chriſtian liberty is too much inlarged by the licentious, who make that indifferent which is evill, or neceſſary, to the confirming of themſelves in ſin: and on the other ſide is too much ſtraitned by others, in making things evill which are not ſo, expunging that out of this gracious Charter, which God hath indulgently granted us therein. Both which are contrary to Gods precepts, which require *us neither to cal good evill, nor evill good.* Iſai. 5. 20. *to turne neither to the right hand nor to the left.* *Deut.* 5. 32. And therefore as the one is a tranſgreſſion againſt God, plainly

plainely violating his precepts: ſo the other is an intollerable preſumption againſt the ſoveraigne authority of the great Lawmaker to impoſe lawes on mens conſciences which God hath not made: and in the effects of it, it is dangerous. For it is in truth a ſeminary of ſuperſtitions, which doe alwayes attend errours of conſcience, and the great nurſery of ſcandalls, in intangling mens conſciences with unneceſſary ſcruples, diſquieting and diſcomforting men thereby, occaſioning the neglect of neceſſary duties whilſt zeale is bent on things unneceſſary, raiſing many jealouſies,

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jealouſies, alienation of affections from others, raſh judging, ſeperation from communion, and a world of other evils, which according to the fruitfullneſſe of errour ariſe from this one roote. Wherefore I beſeech all chriſtians, ſpecially miniſters of the word in the bowells of Ieſus Chriſt, to bee very well adviſed either how they allow of that as lawfull which is indeed ſinfull, or condemne that as ſinfull which is indeed lawfull, and in their invectives againſt ſinne, ſo to attemperate their ſpeeches, that the abuſe and uſe of things bee diſtinguiſhed, that

that corne bee not pulled up for the weeds ſake.

2. As for thoſe that are apt to be ſcandalized, it concernes them to conſider that their taking offence at their brothers liberty is their owne weakneſſe, and danger. It's ſure thy weakneſſe of judgement, or affection that thou art ſo apt to ſtumble at thy brothers actions. And is not weakneſſe burden enough to thy ſelfe, but that it muſt alſo become thy brothers burden? Wilt thou make thy ignorance his puniſhment? Learne better that moſt neceſſary leſſon, *deſcendere in teipſum, to look into thy ſelfe*, and to know

§. 26. *3. To admoniſh men of being ſcandalized by anothers uſe of his liberty, and directions to that end.*

know thy ſelfe: to take a right meaſure of thy knowledge, and to ſubmit thy ſelfe to the reaſons and judgements of the ſtronger. It concernes the Father to bee indulgent to his childs weakeneſſe: but the child ſhould learne to ſubmit to the Fathers judgement. The ſtronger ſhould favour the weaker, but the weaker ſhould preferre the ſtronger before themſelves. 2. It's thy danger alſo: How doſt thou by ſuch ſtumbling incommodate thy ſelfe! Thou mighteſt learne good by thy ſtronger brother, thou takeſt harme: hee might bee a ſtaffe to ſtay thee,

thee, thou makeſt him a ſtumbling-block to overthrow thee: he might eaſe thy conſcience, ſo as to walke more comfortably: thou makeſt uſe of him onely to fetter thy conſcience that it may walke more heavily: he might heale thy ſores: hee doth but wound: ther's diſagreement from that which ſhould promote charity, a breach where there ſhould bee ſtrongeſt affection. Doe not thy ſelfe ſo much harme, thy brother ſo much wrong. To this end receive from me theſe directions. 1. Acquaint thy ſelfe with the difference that is to bee made between ſuperſtructures

ctures and fundamentalls of Chriſtian doctrine, whether of faith or practice: Know this, that though hee is no true beleever, that beleeves not all Gods truth which hee knowes to bee Gods truth, nor truly obedient that obeyes not all Gods precepts, which hee knowes to be ſuch, yet he may bee a true beleever, and truly obedient, who beleeving and practiſing fundamentals, things neceſſary to be knowne and practiſed by all, yet beleeves not, or practiſeth not ſundry ſuperſtructures, not out of unbeleife of God or enmity to his will, but ſimple ignorance.

norance. Bee not then hardly conceited of him that knowes not, or practiſeth not through ignorance things not fundamentall, eſpecially if they be remote from the foundation. Let not thy zeale be equall for the ſmaller *and the greater matters of the Law*, as our Saviour diſtinguiſheth them, *Mat.* 23.23. 2. Bee not raſh or too ſtiffe in thy opinion, when it is *circa diſputabilia, about diſputable points*, ſuch as honeſt and learned men doe vary in, ſo that it can bee hardly diſcerned, who is in the right. Let thy conceits of thy ſelfe be modeſt: and bee willing to learne from a-

any

any one that which is truth. 3. Be not apt to ſuſpect anothers unſoundnes: *Iudge not that thou be not judged.* Mat. 7. 1. *Who art thou that judgeſt anothers ſervant?* Rom. 14. 4. *Why doſt thou judge thy brother? Wee ſhall all ſtand before the judgement ſeat of Chriſt.* verſ. 10. 4. Laſtly wherein thou agreeſt with thy brother, what thou haſt learned as he hath done, profeſſe that; practiſe that with concord, and waite till God ſhall joyne you together in one mind, and one way for the reſt. Remember that golden rule of the Apoſtle. *Philip.* 3. 15, 16. *Let us therefore as many*

many as be perfect bee thus minded: and if in any thing yee bee otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveale even this unto you. Nevertheleſſe whereto wee have already attained, let us walke by the ſame rule, let us mind the ſame thing.

Cap. 5.

Of ſcandalizing in ſpeciall by enticing practiſes.

§. 1. *A woe belongs to ſcandalizers by enticing practiſes.*

THE next way of ſcandalizing is by deviſed practiſes intended to beguile mens ſoules, and to harme their conſciences: to which alſo the generall aſſertion is to

to be applyed, and a woe is to bee pronounced as belonging to them that by cunning and ſubtle devices, by counſels, perſwaſions, laying before men alluring objects, doe ſcandalize others. Such a one was *Balaam*, Revel. 2.14. *Who taught* Balaak *to caſt a ſtumbling-block before the children of* Iſrael, *to eat things ſacrificed to Idols, and to commit fornication.* But Gods vengeance followed him, he was ſlaine with the ſword by the *Iſraelites*, Num. 31.8. And St *Iude verſ.* 11. tells us, *a woe is to them that runne greedily after the errour of* Balaam *for reward.* Of the ſame

same stamp was *Ieroboam* the sonne of *Nebat*, who caused Israel to sin, by setting up two Calves of gold, one in *Bethel*, and the other in *Dan*, instituting high places, and Priests of those Calves, offering sacrifices, and keeping a feast to them. 1. *Kings* 12.30. &c. The issue of which was the cutting off his house, and destroying it from off the face of the earth. 1. *Kings*. 13.34. And he his still stiled by the holy Ghost *Ieroboam the sonne of Nebat which caused Israel to sinne*. The like woe in some one way or another belongs to all those that tread in the

ſame ſteps.

§. 2. *How men Scandalize by enticing practiſes.*

To conceive more fully of this ſort of ſcandalizing, we are to conſider that this kinde of ſcandalizing hath diverſe acts. The firſt and principall is in the braine, that contrives ſome pernitious device to enſnare mens ſoules by; for the moſt part intended to that end: but if it ſtay there, and ſhew not it ſelfe in outward act, it is only a ſcandall inchoate or begun. The outward acts by which it ſhewes it ſelfe, are either of words, or of deeds. We may ſee it in the ſcandall of *Balaam* & *Balak*: *Balaam* deviſeth a way to ſcandalize the Iſraelites

raelites by ſending the whooriſh daughters of *Moab* among them, thereby enticing them to commit whoredome, and to joyne with them in their Idol-feaſts: *Balaam* deviſeth this, he imparts it to *Balak*, and He puts it in practiſe: in this *Balaam* was the principall, *Balak* the acceſſary: *Balaam* began the ſcandall, *Balak* perfected it. *Ionadab* the ſon of *Shimeah* deviſeth a way for *Amnon* to practiſe his inceſtuous luſt with his ſiſter *Tamar*, & adviſeth him to execute it, by which he committed a foule ſin. 2. *Sam.* 13. 5. This counſell of *Ionadab* was a ſcandall to *Am-*

non by a ſubtil way. *Iulian* the *Apoſtata* abſtaines from the ſhedding the blood of Chriſtiãs which *Diocletian*, & other Emperours before had ſhed: he ſaw that it did but encreaſe Chriſtianity, men being ambitious of death that they might have the honour and Crowne of martyrdome. But hee uſeth ſly and cunning devices to inſnare men in *Paganiſme*, he promotes the moſt zealous *Pagans*, makes the ſchooles free only for them, countenances them, ieeres at the doctrine of Chriſt, ſcoffs at the rites of Chriſtians, foments their contentions, and thereby drawes many

many to Apoſtaſie; many to a love of Paganiſme, and thereby ſcandalizeth them. Innumerable of the like ſubtil devices are uſed in every age to inſnare mens ſouls by enticing them to doe evill. And this ſort of ſcandalizing differs from that ſcandall which is by ſinfull example, in that the action of ſuch ſcandall is intended onely for to ſatisfie the doers luſt, though it becomes ſcandalous by it's venomous nature: the ſcandall by an enticing practiſe is ſinfull, and intended alſo to further ſin, though ſometimes the ſcandalizer know not the thing hee

perſwades to, to be ſin. It differs alſo from ſcandall by perſecutiõ in that that ſcandall is by force, the other by fraud.

§. 3. *Difference of ſcandalizers by enticing practiſes in reſpect of the part they act therein.*

Now all ſuch kinde of ſcandalizing by enticeing practiſes is ſinfull and deſerves woe, but all is not alike ſinfull: nor hath the ſame degree of woe awarded to it. For difference is to bee made between ſcandalizers according to the part they act in this tragœdy, or miſchiefe of ſcandals. For there are ſome that are the contrivers, & Counſellours of ſuch divelliſh machinations: others only *moti movent*, being ſet on worke they execute.

The

The inventer & perſwader in this thing is deeper in the guilt of the ſcandal then the meere actor. For it is more voluntary in him that contrives, more of his own motion, than it is in him that acts what another ſuggeſts. He that leads and rules the other is the principall, hee that conſents and followes is but a ſecond. Wherefore the ſcandalizing of the children of Iſrael by the daughters of *Moab* is rather in ſcripture imputed to *Balaam*, who taught that wicked device, then to *Balak*, who put it into execution: and *Ieroboam* that deviſed the golden Calves is rather ſaid to

cauſe Iſrael *to ſinne*, then the workman that made and ſet them up.

§. 4. *Difference of ſcandalizers by enticing practiſes in reſpect of the motives which incite them.*

Secondly, difference is to be made between ſcãdalizers of this kinde in reſpect of the ſeveral motives which lead them to offend others. For firſt, ſome doe ſcandalize others out of craft for their ungodly and unrighteous ends. Thus *Balaam* the ſonne of *Peor* deviſed a way to ſcandalize the Iſraelites that hee might *gaine the wages of unrighteouſneſſe*. 2. *Pet*. 2. 15. *Ieroboam* the ſonne of *Nebat* ſets up two golden Calves at *Dan* & *Bethel*, *which became a ſnare to the people of Iſrael*, & this was

was done to maintaine his rebellion againſt his *Prince*, and confirme the kingdome to himſelfe, 1. *Kings*.12.26.27. *Jonadab* the ſon of *Shimeah* perſwades *Amnon* to raviſh his ſiſter, & this was done that hee might the more ingratiate himſelfe to *Amnon* his friend. 2. *Sam.* 13.3. The Phariſees deviſed waies of ſuperſtition and hypocriſie *that they might devoure widowes houſes*. *Mat.* 23.14. 15. *Elymas* the Sorcerer *with ſubtilty ſeeks to turn away the Deputy from the faith*, that hee might retain his power with him. *Acts*.13.8.10. The falſe Apoſtles ſought to cor-

rupt the faith of the *Galathians* concerning Iuſtification by the law that S. *Paul being excluded, themſelves might be affected.* *Gal.* 4. 17. Thoſe of whom the Apoſtle ſaies, 2. *Tim.* 3. 6. *that crept into houſes, and lead away ſilly women laden with ſins led away with divers luſts,* did it no doubt to make a prey of them. And with the ſame ſpirit at this day doe many ſeducing Ieſuites and Seminary Prieſts *bred of the ſmoke of the bottomleſſe pit* ſcandalize many ignorant or corrupt ſoules by drawing them to their impious Idolatry, & ſuperſtition, their Antichriſtian

ſtian errors and deceits, that they may maintaine the unrighteous tyranny of the Roman Biſhops, maintaine thẽſelves, their Colledges, and fraternities in a rich and plenti. full manner by *Druriſy-ing* (as the ſecular Prieſts call it) that is by cheating their proſelytes. And no better are the ends of many other Heretiques, as *Socinians*, *Anabaptiſts*, *Familiſts*, *Separatiſts* and the reſt of the litter of grievous Wolves, as S. *Paul* calls them, *Acts* 20. 30. that enter among Chriſtians and ſpare not the flock. Coſin-germanes to which are all that for wicked ends corrupt

rupt mens conſciences: as the harlot that enticeth lovers to her for gaine: that corrupt young heires in their manners by humouring them, pleaſing them in their vaine luſts of ſwaggering and gallantry (as they call it) that they may in fine cheate them of their lands or money by gameing with them, or ſome ſuch practiſe: *that make their neighbours drinke, put the bottle to them, and make them drunken, that they may ſee their nakedneſſe*; an uſe in *Habakkuks* times. *Hab:* 2. 15. That they may diſcover their ſecrets, robbe their pockets, draw them to ſuretiſhip

tiſhip for them, and ſuch other evill purpoſes. Now all theſe doe ſcandalize *plenâ voluntate, with full will*, wittingly & deliberately, and thereby ſhew themſelves to bee full of Satan, throughly diabolized profeſſours of his art, which is to make it his buſineſſe, *to goe about ſeeking whom he may devoure*: they are as S. *Paul* called *Elymas*, Acts 13.10. *children of the Divell, enemies to righteouſneſſe, that ceaſe not to pervert the right wayes of the Lord.* 2. Some doe ſcandalize others by enticing practiſes not out of any oblique or indirect ends contrary to their pretences:

ces: but out of love and zeale to their errours, or other things wherein they ſcandalize them. Of this ſort are many Heretiques and Sciſmatiques, and Idolaters that ſollicite men to embrace the errours they hold, or the ſuperſtitions they practiſe out of meer zeale to their errours and ſuperſtitions. *Iezabel* was zealous for the worſhip of *Baal*, and therefore ſhee entertaines and promotes the Prieſts of *Baal* at her owne table, that ſhee might further her ſuperſtition, out of the mad affection ſhee had to the Idol. Saint *Paul* ſayes of the Iewes that went about to eſtabliſh

bliſh their owne righteouſneſſe that they did it *out of a zeale of God, though not according to knowledge*, Ro:10.2. There are not a few that corrupt others by enticing them to drunkenneſſe, idleneſſe &c. For no other end but becauſe they love their ſin, and would have as many companions with them in their ſin as they can infect, to build up the Divells kingdome. The adultereſſe with much faire ſpeech drawes the ſimple young man to cō-mit lewdnes with her, only to ſatisfy her immoderate Luſt, *Pr.* 7.21. Theſe are very grievous ſcandalizers harming and deſtroying

stroying their brethrens soules to further their sin, and *to make others children of hell like themselves*. And it shewes in them a wicked disposition that loves and delights in evill. Yet because it is out of some ignorance (though it bee such as is *pravæ dispositionis, of an evill disposition*) it is therefore lesse voluntary then the former, and thereby lesse evill, and lesse obnoxious to woe. 3. some doe scandalize others by faire words out of misguided love to the persons they scandalize: so that the motive hereof is an affection of love compounded with ignorance,

rance, and imprudence. Thus *Peter* adviſed Chriſt to decline his ſufferings, out of love as he thought: but ignorantly, and therefore our Saviour reiected his counſell as ſauouring of a meere carnall and humane affection. *Mat.* 16. 23. telling him that *hee was a ſcandall to him.* In this manner many carnall parents have diſſwaded their children from Martyrdome, from zeale, and forwardneſſe in Religion, leaſt they ſhould bee loſt, as they thinke, become melancholy, unfaſhionable, miſſe their preferment, be mocked by men of the world &c. wherein they thinke

thinke they ſhew much love to thē, but do indeed ſcandalize, or harme their ſoules, as *Peter* did Chriſt. But the woe due to this is leſſe then the former, becauſe it is leſſe voluntary, as being not out of a love to the evill, but to the perſons they perſwade through ſimple ignorance of the evill to which they perſwade.

§. 5. *Difference of ſcandalizers by enticing practiſes according to the matter wherein they ſcandalize.*

Thirdly difference is to be made of ſcandalizeing in this kind according to the matter or thing wherein they ſcandalize them. For ſometimes men doe lay a ſtumbling block by leducing men from the truth, *in credendis, in matters of faith.* As thoſe

thoſe of whom S. *Peter* ſpeakes, 2. *Pet.* 2. 1. *that brought in damnable hereſies, or hereſies of perdition*: and thoſe of whom S. *Paul* ſpeaks, that ſought to *deprive Chriſtians of their liberty in Chriſt, that they might bring them into bondage*, Gal. 2. 4. *thoſe that corrupted mens minds from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt.* 2. Cor. 11. 3. Some doe ſcandalize others *in agendis, in matters of practiſe*, whether pertaining to Religion, or to civill converſation. As *Balaam* that corrupted the *Iſraelites* in both: and all others that draw men to ſuperſtition, intemperance and the like ſinnes.

Now

Now the former are (*cæteris paribus, other things being alike*) the worſe ſort of ſcandalizers: for as much as a pernitious errour in matters of faith is more dangerous, as more eaſily ſpreading and infecting the minds, then a corrupt practiſe that hath leſſe colour for it, and likely more reſiſtance.

§. 6. *The reaſons of the woe due to this ſcandaliZing.*

The reaſons why a woe belongs to ſuch Scandalizers are 1. Becauſe they are plaine and manifeſt agents and factors for Satan and his Kingdome. Our Lord Chriſt called *Peter Satan*, when he was a Scandall to him, though but out of imprudence. *Mat.* 16.23.

16.23. much more juſtly may the title be faſtened on him that ſcandalizeth out of craft, who is *ingeniosè nequam, wittily wicked.* For this reaſon S. *Paule* ſtyled *Elymas* the Sorcerer a *Child of the Divell*, becauſe he did not ceaſe to *pervert the right waies of the Lord*, *Act.* 13.8. For what doe ſuch but γυμνῇ κεφαλῇ with open face declare themſelves for Satan, and aſſociate themſelves to him in promoting his worke, which is the devouring of ſoules: and therefore may expect his pay, to whoſe ſervice they have addicted themſelves. 2. becauſe they are direct enemies

nemies to God. *S. Paul* ſtiled *Elymas, an enimy to all righteouſneſſe. Acts* 13.8. And what is an enemy to righteouſneſſe, but an enemy to God, *Who loveth righteouſneſſe and hateth iniquity?* what doe ſuch ſcandalizers but apply themſelves to ſeduce men from their ſubjection to Gods kingdome: and as much as in them lies, overthrow his dominion? Now ſuch as ſhew enmity againſt God may juſtly expect hoſtility from him againſt them, wrath in requitall of their unrighteouſneſſe, and that in proportionable meaſure, anſwerable to the meaſure of their

their iniquity.

For application of this truth. 1. We may hereby discover the great guilt that lies on them, that by this way scandalize others, and the great misery that belongs to them. Surely there are every where many, who at least through imprudence doe scandalize men to their ruine by insinuating practises: many carnall parents that relish not the word of life themselves, out of prejudice against Godlinesse, and holy zeale disswade their Children from diligence in duties of godlinesse, prayer, reading, hearing, meditating

§. 7. *Application 1. To manifest the great guilt of Scandalizers in this kind.*

tating on Gods word, as conceiving that theſe things will make them ſilly, unfaſhionable, unſociable, dejected, melancholick, opinionative, that it will hinder their credit and preferment. And therefore divert the current of their minds to the reading of Poems, play-bookes, amorous writings, acquaint them with merry company, pregnant wits, that they may learne gallantry of behaviour, whet their wits, erect their ſpirits. But inſtead of learning theſe things, they learne for the moſt part the damnable Arts of ſwearing, whoring, fighting, drinking

drinking, riot, ſcoffing at religion, and the reſt of thoſe helliſh courſes, which are in theſe daies vailed under the name of bravery of ſpirit, and gallantry of carriage. And this falls out by Gods juſt judgement, that while parents are enemies to that noble ſervice which their children by their godlineſſe, and holy zeale might doe for God the ſoveraigne Lord; to that *Heroicall* fortitude of minde, in contemning the world, and bearing the extreameſt evills for Chriſts ſake, which faith produceth; that incomparable joy, that true liberty which a holy life

begetteth, that ſurpaſſing wiſdome, and uſefull worth that attend the knowledge of God, and an upright heart towards him: their children ſhould fall into the baſeſt ſervices of their own luſts, & of Satans will: enſlave themſelves to whores, and drinke, and ſuch like effæminating things, be filled with meere vanity, empty of reall worth, and prove a griefe to their parents, a burden to their countrey, the ruine of their houſes, and which is yet worſt, Children of hell. And as this is the courſe of too many ill-adviſed parents, ſo it is the manner of too many

unfaithfull

unfaithfull friends, and misguided masters, who being led by the same spirit endeavour to quench the beginnings of new birth in their friends, and servants, by their counsells: if they perceive in them any sense of sin, any degree of humiliation, any application of their minds to religion, any alienation of their minds from the prophanenes & vanity of the world, they set their wits on worke how to prevent them, conceiving they shall doe them a pleasure, when as their Counsells tend to their perdition. And thus they doe as they say apes doe to their young ones,

amplexando ſtrangulant, by hugging them, they kill them. Unhappy men! that thinking to doe good, deſtroy thoſe whō they love, and procure a woe to their own ſoules in recompence of their counſells, that under the covert of friendſhip act Satans part: and precipitate themſelves and their followers into perdition: But beſides theſe there are not a few, who are zealous for corrupt opinions, for ſuperſtitious traditions, for drunken uſages, for prophane libertiniſme &c. And others who out of craftie reaches, and ſubdolous intentions, for worldly ad-

advantages apply themſelves to ſeduce others. Of which ſort are no doubt many emiſſaries out of Popiſh ſeminaries, agents for ſeparation, and other ſeedeſmen of tares. Shall I take up the Apoſtles wiſh, *Gal.* 5. 12. *I would they were cut off that trouble us?* So indeed we wiſh, but my text puts me out of hope of attaining it in this life, & therefore I can doe no more but only read their doome, that a heavy direfull woe hangs over their heads, which will as ſurely fall on them, as God is true. For how can it be otherwiſe, but that Gods wrath ſhould

break forth againſt thoſe that continue practiſes againſt him as his enimies? Can any Prince brook the ſowers of ſedition, the ſeducers of his ſubjects from their allegiance, the underminers of his authority? If *Claudius Cæſar* were ſo blockiſh, we ſhall ſeldome meet with ſuch another. Certaine it is, God will not ſo put it up, he hath proclaimed himſelfe to be a God that *will by no means cleare the guilty. Exod.* 34. 7. *that he will repay them that hate him to their face: Let no man deceive himſelfe, God is not mocked.* There is a treaſure of wrath reſerved

ved for all ſuch factors for hell. The ſame cup that *Balaam* and *Ieroboam*, and *Iannes* and *Iambres* and *Elymas* dranke of ſhall all ſeducing Ieſuits & inveigling Sectaries and promoters of licentiouſneſſe drinke of. The ſame judgement abides them: the ſame hell muſt hold them.

§. 8. *2. To admoniſh men to take heed of ſcandalizing this way.*

Wherefore in the next place admonitiõ is needfull. 1. To thoſe that out of imprudence doe ſcandalize, that they conſider what they doe. Thou that diſſwadeſt frõ that which is good, out of ill-adviſed love, conſider better what thou doeſt. Wilt thou diſ-

ſwade that which God commands? Wilt thou goe about to croſſe his worke? *Gamaliels* ſaying ſhould leſſon us better: *That which is of God we cannot overthrow, leaſt haply we be found even to fight againſt God. Acts* 5. 39. Wilt thou deſtroy thy brothers ſoule whom thou thinkeſt to benefit? Wilt thou doe the Divell ſervice under ſhew of a good office to thy friend? S. *Peters* caſe ſhould be a *memento* to thee, that thou maiſt deſerve the title of Satan by ſuch officiouſneſſe. 2. To thoſe that out of zeale to their opinions and affection to their waies doe ſcandalize

lize, that they look well what it is they are zealous for, *It is good alwaies to be Zealous in a good thing*, *Gal.* 4. 18. But in evill the more zeale the worſe. Nothing worſe then *Iezabels* zeale for *Baal*; nothing better then *Elijahs* zeale for God. In a wrong way, the faſter a man runnes, the worſe; in a right way, the better. It is miſchievous enough to ſcandalize others ignorantly; it is more miſchievous when it is done with zeale: for that is done with more activity, and after a more pernitious manner. It is pitty good mettall ſhould be ill placed. It might doe

much good were it rightly uſed, uſe thy zeale for God, it will be thy happineſſe: if thou uſe it for evill, it will be thy madneſſe. 3. To thoſe that ſcandalize others out of crafty and evill intendments, that they doe but weave a net to catch themſelves. Thou that art willingly the Divels agent, take this with thee, that the divell will overreach in the end. What wages have witches, the divels covenant ſervants, but confuſion? And what reward canſt thou that art the Divels hired ſervant expect but deſtruction? *Thou haſt ſold thy ſelf to worke wickedneſſe*: and iniquity

iniquity ſhall bee thy ruine: while thou doeſt deſtroy thy brothers ſoule, thou doeſt by the ſame labour damne thine own. Oh take this wholeſome counſell: *repent of this thy wickedneſſe: and pray God, if perhaps the thoughts of thine heart may be forgiven thee: Acts* 8.22. uſe thy wit and zeale for God who will doe thee good: debaſe not thy ſelfe to doe the Divell ſervice, who loves thee onely as a *Salvage* doth, that hee may devoure thee.

§. 9. Laſtly for thoſe that are in danger of being ſcandalized by ſuch practiſes, it concernes them

§. 9. *And thoſe that are apt to be ſcandalized.*

them 1. to walke by the light of Gods word. For it is light that muſt keepe us from ſtumbling: If a man *walke in the day hee ſtumbleth not, becauſe hee ſeeth the light of this world.* But if a man *walke in the night he ſtumbleth, becauſe there is no light in him. Iohn* 11.9.10. So it is concerning the ſoule, if there be ignorance and errour in it, it is eaſily ſcandalized, but light and underſtanding preſerve a man ſafe. 2. To look well to thy goings, without which thou maiſt ſtumble though thou have light before thee. Remember then that of *Solomon, Prov.* 14.15. *The ſimple*

ſimple beleiveth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his goings. Bee not eaſily credulous then of mens counſells: truſt not lightly to their judgements: *Try their ſpirits, examine* their counſels, & opiniõs afore thou embrace them. Forget not S. *Pauls* rule, *Rom.* 16. 17. *To marke them which cauſe diviſions, and offences contrary to the doctrine which is delivered to us, and avoyd them. For they that are ſuch ſerve not our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, but their owne belly, and by good words and faire ſpeeches deceive the hearts of the ſimple.*

CAP.

Cap. 6.

Of ſcandalizing in ſpeciall by perſecution.

§. 1. THe fourth way of ſcandalizing in the diſtribution before made is ſcandalizing by injuring or perſecuting. This way *Maldonate* conceives our Saviour ſpecially intended *verſ.* 2. and he gathers it from the *Antitheſis* as it is ſet down by S. *Mat. ch:* 18. 5. 6. for having ſaid *v.* 5. *who ſo ſhall receive one ſuch little one in my name, receiveth me.* Addes immediately *v.* 6. *But who ſo ſhall offend one of*

of theſe little ones which believe in me &c. Where *ſcandalizing verſ.6.* is oppoſed to *receiving*, that is entertaining with kindneſſe, and therefore imports injuring or perſecuting. And indeed ſcandalizing is an effect of perſecution, even ſuch ſcandalizing as cauſeth *Apoſtaſie*. Our Saviour ſaies of the ſtony ground which reſembles ſuch hearers *as have no roote in themſelves, when tribulation or perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the word, by and by they are offended*, Mat. 13. 21. and that when *many ſhall be delivered up to be afflicted, many ſhall be offended.* Mat. 24.10.

Wherefore

A woe belongs to ſcandalizers by perſecution.

Wherefore we conclude, *That miſery or woe belongs to thoſe that ſcandalize others, by afflicting, injuring, or perſecuting them.* Which woe belongs to all that ſhall cauſe enmities, griefes, and other harmings of mens minds, by terrifiing them with threats, by wronging them in ſpoiling their goods, by giving them blowes, or other wayes, whoever the perſons thus harmed be. For ſuch workes being the works of unrighteouſneſſe ſhall have their due vengeance. *Vnto them that are contentious, that obey unrighteouſneſſe ſhall bee indignation and wrath, tribulation*

tribulation & anguiſh upon the ſoule of every man that doth evill. Ro.2.8.9. But yet in a higher degree the woe belongs to them that offend beleivers in Chriſt, who are the chiefe object of perſecution, which are chiefly meant in this place. Of whom the Apoſtle ſaies, 2.*Theſ.*1.6. *It is a righteous thing with God to recompenſe tribulation to them that trouble ſuch.* To cleare this truth I ſhall diſtinctly. anſwer theſe 3 queſtions. 1. wherein perſecution is exerciſed, and how believers are perſecuted, 2. how ſcandalized by perſecution. 3. What

3. What woe belongs to ſuch as thus ſcandalize them.

§. 2. *How beleivers are perſecuted.*

For an anſwer to the firſt of theſe queſtions; perſecution in *Greeke* διώκειν doth moſt properly ſignify an eager ſwift motion, as in running a race, or in the chaſing of an enemy flying, with an hoſtile mind: by tranſlation it ſignifies any eager purſuit, or ſeeking after a thing which wee would obtaine, as when we are commanded *Heb.* 12. 14. εἰρήνην διώκετε, *follow after peace*, & the Apoſtle *Phil.* 3. 12. διώκω δὲ εἰ καταλάβω, *I purſue if I may comprehend or attaine to*, hee meanes the knowlgdge and

and grace of Chriſt. But in the Eccleſiaſticall uſe of this word it is appropriated to thoſe afflictions which unbeleiving and ungodly men doe ſet themſelves to inflict on the godly and believers. In this ſenſe it is uſed *Mark.*10.30. where our Saviour ſayes that the loſſe of things left for him ſhall bee recompenced with an *hundred fold in this time*, yet μετὰ διωγμῶν *not without perſecutions*, that is afflictions and hard uſages from evill men. And S. *Paul* 2. *Tim.* 3.12. *They that live godly in Chriſt Ieſus* διωχθήσονται *ſhall be perſecuted*, that is, be ill handled by the ungodly

godly which thing they doe many wayes. Sometimes by ſeeking after their lives; ſo that nothing will ſatisfy them but the ſhedding of their blood, as if nothing elſe could quench their thirſt, but a draught of a godly Chriſtians blood. Yet not all in the like cruell manner: To ſome it's enough that they can deſtroy them: to others it's not ſufficient unleſſe they can cauſe them *ſenſim mori, to dye a lingring death by torture*, ſo as to be long a dying, or that if it be ſhorter for the time, it may be with the extreameſt paine, or with the extreameſt ignominy. Nor are the impulſive

ſive cauſes the ſame in all: it's in all hatred of the godly, but not for the ſame reaſon: and therefore the bitterneſſe of this hatred is in ſome greater and more laſting: in others leſſe, and ſooner removed: S. *Paul perſecuted the Church of God:* but he did it *out of ignorance and unbeliefe*, and therefore was the more capeable of repentance and mercy, 1.*Tim.* 1. 13. *Iezabel* perſecuted the Prophet *Elijah* out of zeale for her Idolatry, 1.*Kings* 19.2. *Herodias*, becauſe *John Baptiſt* had preached againſt her companying with *Herod*, *Mark.6. Herod* perſecuted *Iames* and *Peter*

Peter that hee might pleaſe the people. *Acts* 12. In all there's malice, but upon different reaſons. And for the kind of death which they inflict on them, it is different according to the divers degrees of their malice, wit and power, *ſome they ſtone, others they ſaw in two, others they ſlay with the ſword. Heb.* 11. 37. ſome they hang on a croſſe, ſome they caſt to wild beaſts, ſome they drowne in the ſea, ſome they boyle in oyle to death, ſome they broyle on a greediron, ſome they burne at a ſtake, ſome they make away in ſecret, as the Hiſtories of the Church

Church doe abundantly teſtify. Sometimes perſecution reacheth not to the taking away the life, but to bonds and impriſonment, as it befell *Paul* and *Silas Acts* 16. to baniſhment, loſſe of goods, as it befell the Saints, *Heb.* 11.37. to excommunications, *and caſting out of the Synagogue*, as our Saviour foretold, *Ioh.* 16. 2. to threatnings and *hard ſpeeches*, *Iude* 15. to ſlanders, and *falſe accuſations*, *Mat.* 5. 11. to ſcoffes, inſulting Sarcaſmes, which are called *cruell mockings*, *Heb.* 11. 36. and with which it is ſaid *Iſmael* perſecuted *Iſaak*. *Gal.* 4. 29. In a word all

thoſe

thoſe wayes of inflicting evill, whereby the malignant ſpirits of wicked men doe harme the godly in their bodies, outward eſtates, & name, are acts of perſecution. Such kind of evills ſometimes happen to the godly by voluntary vndertakings, as death, and danger, and wants by reaſon of travaile to promote the Goſpell, or the like cauſe: but then they are acts of perſecution when they are by others inflicted on them to doe them miſchiefe. It falls out ſometimes that believers and godly perſons doe moleſt and practiſe one againſt another, by reaſon of private diſcord, and

and grudges from corruption prevayling although they agree in the worſhip of the ſame Lord. Sometimes ſuch kinde of practiſes are betweene unbeleivers themſelves, who ſeekes one anothers lives, vexe, ſpoyle, expell one another, by reaſon of private enmities: ſometimes they doe the like to beleevers upon private quarrells ariſing from ambition, covetouſneſſe or the like cauſe. By all which there may harming and ſcandalizing come; But it is then in the uſuall Eccleſiaſticall acception of the word, perſecution, when ungodly men inflict thoſe

evills on godly and beleiving perſons, *quâ tales, as they are ſuch*, for their piety or faiths ſake, *for righteouſneſſe ſake.* *Mat.* 6.10. 1. *Pet.*3.14. *For Chriſts ſake and the Goſpells*, *Mark.*10.29. More diſtinctly when men inflict evill on others for their profeſſion of Chriſt, and his Goſpell, for not ſerving Idols, as when the Emperour did put to death Chriſtians for refuſing to offer incenſe to their heathen Gods. And *Nebuchadnezzar* caſt into a fiery fornace, three Iewes for not bowing downe to his golden Image, or when they bring evill on them for doing their

their duty, the reproving of ſin, delivering Gods meſſage, as when *Ahab* and *Ieſabel* made *Elijah* to fly, *Micajah* to lye in priſon, *Herod* caſt *Iohn Baptiſt* in priſon for declaring their ſins to them, and foretelling ther judgment, when the Princes of *Darius* procured *Daniel* to bee caſt into a den of Lions for praying to God three times aday, when the Iewes drave the Apoſtles from one citty to another for preaching the Goſpell, then it is perſecution; And thus even at this day thoſe that have power doe perſecute chriſtians in ſome places by cruell torments, in

ſome by expulſion from their dwellings, ſpoyling their goods, in ſome by tauntes, mockes, threates, diſgracings, ſlanders &c. For their embracing the word of life, rejection of Idolatry, publiſhing of the truth, *non-conformity* to the vices of the world. For it is the lot of Gods people which our Saviour requires us to remember, *Iohn* 16.20. *The ſervant is no greater then the Lord, if they have perſecuted me, they will alſo perſecute you.*

§ 3. *How perſecutions doe ſcandalize.*

Now theſe perſecutions doe ſcandalize, as our Saviour tells us *Mat.* 13. 21. And the reaſon of their ſcandalizing may be

be gathered from our Saviours words, who tells us that the good hearers perſevere, becauſe *they bring forth fruit with patience.* Wherefore on the contrary the ſcandall of the temporary beleivers is for want of patience: Defect of patience to beare the aſſaults of perſecution is that which cauſeth the perſecuted beleiver or hearer of Gods word to be ſcandalized. For the heart of man is ſwayed by paines and delights. *Ariſt. lib:* 2. *Ethic: ad Nicom:* makes *voluptatem & dolorem, pleaſure and griefe,* the generall objects, or matter about which vertues, and

vices are converſant. The reaſon of which is becauſe in all morall things pleaſure and griefe doe move and ſway men to or from a thing. Hereupon it is that when men have not roote of faith, and ſtrength of patience, their reſolutions are altered, their courſes changed, their minds broken by ſuffering hard things: ſo that rather then undergoe them, they will yeild to that ſin which is their ruine. The ſpirits of ſtrong men are apt to be broken with calamities, even as a ſtrong Oake by a mighty wind, yea the feare of things grievous doth oft prevaile to ſcandalize

dalize men. S. *Peter* who was a man of great reſolutions, was daſhed by the charge of a weake mayd, when it tended to bring him into danger, *and all the Diſciples were offended becauſe of Chriſt*, as ſoone as he was apprehended, *Mat.* 26. 31.

§ 4. *What woe belongs to ſcandalizers by perſecution.*

As for the woe that belongs to ſuch ſcandalizing, it is the ſame which is awarded unto other ſorts of ſcandalizing; if not greater: Foraſmuch as this kind of ſcandalizing hath more of malice in it then the reſt. For all perſecutors are moved by bitter malice towards the godly to injure and moleſt them. 'Tis true,

ſometimes their malice is pure malice, ſometimes mixt: but alwayes malice. The Phariſees who perſecuted our Lord Chriſt out of pure malice, *they ſaid, hee had an uncleane ſpirit: Mark.* 3. 30. they called him *a Samaritane, a Wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and ſinners.* They ſought to intangle him, to deſtroy him though his miracles convinced them, *that he was a teacher ſent from God, and that God was with him, Iohn* 3.2. But others perſecuted out of malice compounded with ignorance. *Luk.* 23. 34. ſaith our Saviour, *Father forgive them, for they know not*

not what they doe; compounded with blind zeale; *The time cometh* ſaith our Saviour *Iohn* 16.2. *That whoſoever killeth you will thinke that hee doth God ſervice*. S. *Paul* ſayes *that out of zeale hee perſecuted the Church, Philip.* 3. 6. This malice is leſſe then pure malice, and the woe due to this ſcandalizing by perſecution, leſſe then to the former; 1. *Perſecution* out of blind malice is the more pardonable, and the leſſe puniſhable, then that which is done out of pure malice, which may perhaps be utterly unpardonable, when it is the ſinne againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Whereas S. *Paul*

alleadgeth for himſelfe, that *though he were a perſecutor, and a blaſpheamer, yet hee obtained mercy, becauſe hee did it ignorantly in unbeleife*, 1.*Tim*.1.13. Nevertheleſſe all perſecution of the godly, all ſcandalizing by evill handling of men, without repentance, hath eternall death for its wages. *It is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you*, ſaith S.*Paul*.2.*Theſ*.1.6.& what is the tribulation? He tells them *v*.9. *They ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction frō the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*. And though God ſuffer

ſuffer ſuch enemies of his Church to prevaile for a time, yet few of them in the end eſcape his hand, but by ſome exemplary death, or other grievous judgment they beare the puniſhment of their iniquity. Neither *Pharaoh*, nor *Saul*, nor *Herod*, nor *Nero*, nor *Domitian*, nor any of the *Chaldæan*, *Syrian*, *Roman* perſecutors have eſcaped without deſerved vengeance. As it is juſt with God to *recompence tribulation to them that trouble his people.* So he doth undoubtedly inflict it *ſeriùs aut citiùs*, *ſooner* or *latter*, unles his revēging hand be held up by the repentance of the perſecutor.

perſecutor.

§ 5. *Application. 1. To diſcover the danger of ſuch ſcandalizers.*

For application of this truth, firſt wee may hereby diſcerne the danger of thoſe that this way ſcandalize others. The impetuous malice of perſecutors carries them violently with rage againſt beleivers, ſo that they neither perceive their ſin, nor the woe due to it. Even like a horſe that runs furiouſly and violently, obſerves not into what precipices, pits, down-falls it caſts it ſelfe: ſo a perſecutor that is driven by malice and blind zeale *to breath out threatnings and ſlaughter againſt the Diſciples of Chriſt*, and to ſpoyle the Church

runs

runs (as we uſe to ſo ſay) without feare or wit, neither conſidering whom he perſecutes, nor *how hard a thing it is for him to kick againſt the pricks:* they ſee not what a tempeſt hangs over their heads, what a pit they are falling into. For even then when they ſtudy cruelty, deviſe miſchiefe on their beds, while they act it with their tongue *cutting like a ſharp raſour, weigh the violence of their hands in the earth,* uſe their ſtrength, authority, power, as men that *know not the way of peace, but deſtruction & unhappines are in their wayes,* while they hire ſouldiers, arme exe-

executioners, invent torments for the Saints, even thē & all that while God is *whetting his ſword and bending his bow and making it ready, hee is preparing for him the inſtruments of Death; he ordaineth his arrowes againſt the perſecutors, that their miſchiefe may returne upon their owne head, and their violent dealing may come downe upon their pate.* Pſ. 7. 12. 13, 16. *God is digging up a pit for the wicked,* Pſal. 94. 13. And as ſure as *Pharoah, Saul,* Ie*z*abel, *Herod, Nero, Domitian,* and the reſt of perſecutors have ſuffered divine vengeance: ſo ſurely ſhall all cruell Inquiſitors, barba-

rous

rous Turks, unjuſt oppreſſours, ungodly ſcoffers, divelliſh belyers of Gods people periſh. It is determined in heaven: *upon the wicked hee ſhall raine ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt: this ſhall bee the portion of their cup. For the Lord tryeth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his ſoule hateth*, Pſal. 11.5,6.

§ 6. 2. *To deterre them from it.*

2. This may juſtly deterre men from this way of ſcandalizing by perſecution. A way of ſcandalizing it is that Satan, who vſeth all practiſes to ſtumble men, *vi & dolo*, *by force and Craft*, hath ſet on foote in all times,

times, in all Churches. where princes are infidels or *heretiques* he ſeeks to raiſe them vp to waſte the Church to vexe the godly. where they have profeſſed, and Countenanced the Goſpell, and godlynes, there hee ſets on worke ſome or other as ſecret vnderminers of their peace, ſuch as may reach at them with their tongues, if they cannot with their hands. And it is ſo ſtill: as in ſome places there are perſecuting ſouldiers, and perſecuting Iudges, ſo there are in other places perſecuting ſcoffers, perſecuting accuſers, whoſe buſines is to diſcourage beleivers

beleevers, to affright the godly. not only infidell princes, and hereticall Prelates, but alſo the whole rabble of vitious men, riotous livers, ſons of *Belial* will bee out of their malignity practiſing againſt the Saints that are oppoſite to their wayes. And the divell knowes this to be a prevailing way by reaſon of the love men have to their lives, goods, eaſe, and quietneſſe. But for ſuch as thus doe ſcandalize, it behoves them take notice of the woe following, to remember what our ſaviour ſaid to *Saul, Act. 9. 4, 5. It is hard for thee to kicke againſt the*

the pricks. If they be able to fight with God, let them goe on: if not, let them remember *Iulians* end betimes, that they may not be forced to confeſſe as he did, *vicisti Galilæe; Chriſt hath overcome them*, though to their perdition.

§ 7. *3. To adviſe them that are in danger of being ſcandalized by perſecutions.*

3. Laſtly for thoſe that are apt to be ſcandalized by perſecutions it concernes them to get roote in themſelves, ſtrength of faith, ſtability of patience to ſtand in the time of triall, that they be not overthrowne in their goings by violent ſcandalls.

The fiery triall muſt not be, as if ſome ſtrange thing had

had happened to us; but as men prepared for ſuch a combate, we are wiſely to foreſee the aſſaults of ſuch temptations, that we be not ſurpriſed by them, and to fortifie our ſelves with faith and courage, that we be not forced by them. *We muſt watch, ſtand faſt, quit our ſelves like men, be ſtrong.* 1. *Cor.* 16.13. remembring that the favour of God, the peace of our conſciences, & ſalvation of our ſoules, depends upon our victory: *that the fearfull ſhall be without: to him that overcometh ſhall be given to eate of the tree of life, which is in the middeſt of of the paradiſe of God.* We muſt

muſt breake through terrours; looke beyond death; and *by faith overcomming the world,* and the Prince of it, as Chriſt and the Saints have done, enter into glory.

Chap. 7.

Of the aggravation of the woe belonging to Scandalizers.

§ 1. *The explication of the third propoſition in the text.*

HAving finiſhed the two firſt propoſitions contained in the firſt verſe, there remaines only the third and laſt propoſition containing an aggravation of the woe due to ſcandalizers

zers by comparing it with a leſſer though very grievous affliction, *It were better for him &c.* For the reading & meaning of which, much needs not be ſaid, λυσιτελεῖ (*in Engliſh it is profitable*, to which anſwers in S. *Mat.* συμφέρει *it is behovefull*) is tranſlated by our tranſlators according to the phraſe in Saint *Marke* καλόν ἐστιν αὐτῷ μᾶλλον *it is better for him*. Now in the aggravation it ſelfe wee are to conſider the perſons whoſe offence is ſpoken of, and the grievous puniſhment with which the woe due to ſuch offenders is compared. The perſons of whoſe

whoſe offence our Saviour ſpeaks are *theſe little ones*. Now by *little ones* are not meant little ones in age: For although our Lord Chriſt tooke occaſion from the preſence of little Infants to uſe this phraſe; yet chiefly by the addition of Saint *Matthew* which adds τῶν πιστευόντων εἰς ἐμέ, *That beleive in me*, by the condition of theſe little ones, *that they are converted and become humble as little children*; and becauſe not litle children in age, but litle ones in diſpoſition are apt to be ſcandalized in that manner our Saviour here ſpeaks of, it is plaine that our Saviour meanes by

(*theſe*

(*theſe little ones*) beleivers in him, who are called *little ones*, not from their age, or quantity of body, but from their diſpoſition or condition, becauſe they are little in their owne eyes, or in the eſteeme of the world, or becauſe ſome of them that beleeve on him are leſſe then others: The greivous puniſhmẽt with which the woe due to ſuch offenders is compared, is καταποντισθῆναι ἐν τῷ πελάγει τῆς θαλάσσης, *to be drowned in the deep of the ſea*, as it is in S. *Matthew*; in S. *Marke* βεβλῆσθαι εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, *throwne into the ſea*, in S. *Luke* ἐρριφθαι εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, *caſt into the ſea*, and

& that ἵνα κρεμασθῇ μυλὸς ὀνικὸς ὁπὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτῦ, *that an asse-milstone be hanged about his necke*, in S. *Mark*. εἰ περίκειται λίθος μύλικος περὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτῦ, *a milstone be put about his necke*, in S. *Luk*. εἰ μυλὸς ὀνικὸς περίκειται περὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτῦ, *that an asse-milstone bee about his necke*. Criticks busy themselves about this *asse-milstone*, what it was, and why so called; some conceive it to be the lower milstone, because that is the greater, and our Saviour would expresse the weight of the fall by the greatnesse of the stone: Therefore they say the lower milstone was called ὄνος or the asse, either because

becauſe in manner of an aſſe it bare the burden, or from ὀνεύω to *move*, or *bring about*, becauſe the upper milſtone is turned about it, as *Ianſenius* conceives. But *Suidas* in his Greek Lexicon *in voce* μύλη ſaies the *upper milſtone was called* ὄνος or the aſſe, and this is more likely, and that the reaſon why it was called ὄνος or μύλος ὀνικὸς was becauſe it was turned about with an aſſe, and thereby diſtinguiſhed from *mola truſatilis, that milſtone that was wont to be turned about with the ſtrength of mens armes:* Which is the opinion generally of interpreters, *Ambroſe*, *Hilary*,

Erasmus, *Ianſenius*, *Maldonate &c.* However wee conceive of this milſtone, the intent of our Saviour was to ſhew by this addition the certainty of his periſhing, the weight of his fall, and the irrecoverableneſſe of it; For a man that is caſt into the ſea, and hath a milſtone hanged about his necke, is ſure to periſh, there being no poſſibility for him to uſe his armes or body to ſtay himſelfe from ſinking, and he hath a moſt heavy downfall, the weight of the milſtone carrying him moſt violently into the bottome of the deepe, and his fall is irrecoverable, no man being able

to prevent his fall, or to recover him thence. For this reaſon in the *Revelation of Saint Iohn ch.* 18. 21. Where the irrecoverable deſtruction of Babylon is ſignified, the reſemblance is the ſame with that in my text, *And a mighty Angel tooke up a ſtone like a great milſtone, and caſt it into the ſea, ſaying, Thus with violence ſhall that great Citty Babylon be throwne downe: and ſhall be found no more at all.* *Hierome* in his Comment: on *Math:* 18. 6. ſaies this manner of caſting men into the ſea was *ſecundùm ritum provinciæ quo majorum criminum iſta apud veteres*

Iudæos pœna fuerit, ut in profundum ligato ſaxo demergerentur: according to the manner of that province, in which that was among the ancient Iewes the puniſhment of greater crimes, that they ſhould be drowned in the deepe with a ſtone bound about their neckes. But this puniſhment we finde no mention of in the old Teſtament, though of ſtoning often. what other writers relate I cannot ſpeake, nor upon what evidence S. *Hierome* found this to be the manner of the ancient Iewes to puniſh great crimes by drowning the malefactors in the deepe of the ſea, with a mil-

ſtone

ſtone hanged about their necke. *Caſaubon* in his notes on *Matthew* 18.6. proves by a paſſage or two which he cites out of *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Athenæus*, that the *Greekes* uſed καταποντισμὸν *drowning in the Sea*, as a puniſhment among them, but he finds not that it was by tying a ſtone to their necke, but rather by putting the malefactor into leade. And it may ſeeme by a paſſage which he cites out of *Polybius*, that it was rather reckoned among the eaſier, then more grievous ſorts of puniſhment. *Maldonate* conceives it might bee that our Saviour in uſing this

reſemblance did allude unto the pride which hee here cenſures, as he did *Math:* 11. 23. when hee ſaid; *And thou Capernaum which art exalted to heaven, ſhalt be brought down to hell.* What ever the alluſion be, Saint *Hierome* rightly notes, that *our Saviour meant hereby to let us underſtand that it were better for ſcandalizers to receive a ſhort puniſhment here, then eternall torments.* Or that though to be caſt into the ſea with a milſtone about the necke, be a certaine, grievous, irrecoverable deſtruction, yet the woe of ſcandalizers is more certaine, more grievous, more irrecoverable

recoverable. And it is conſiderable that the *Emphaſis* of our Saviours words in averring this, ſeemes to intimate that He ſpake this with ſome vehemency, as if he had ſaid to this purpoſe: though it bee that thoſe that beleive in me are litle ones in their owne and others eyes; yet I tell you it will be more tolerable for a man to bee thus dolefully caſt into the ſea, then for him to incurre the puniſhment of offending theſe litle ones, as little as they be, yea though hee offend but one of theſe little ones.

Now from this ſpeech of our Saviour, wee may

§ 2. *Thoſe that believe in Chriſt are little ones.*

obſerve that thoſe that beleive in Chriſt, *are litle ones*; which is true, whether we compare them among themſelves, or with others; for *Magnum & parvum* are relatives, as *Ariſtotle* obſerves in his *Categories* in the chapter περὶ πρός. Now compared among themſelves, they are ſome leſſe then others. Our Saviour *Math:* 25, 40. by ſaying, *In as much as yee have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, yee have done it unto mee*; Intimates that ſome of his brethren are leſſe then others: And indeed ſo it is.

§ 3. *Some leſſe then others in ſpiritual gifts and graces.*

1 In reſpect of ſpirituall

tuall gifts and graces ſome are leſſe then others. Our Saviour in his charge to *Peter* concerning his paſtorall office diſtinguiſheth betweene ἀρνία his little *Lambes*, and πρόβατα his *ſheepe*, Ioh. 21. 15, 16. and requires *Peter* to doe as it was foretold of himſelfe, *Iſay* 40. 11. *that he ſhould feed his flocke like a ſhepheard, that hee ſhould gather the Lambes with his armes, and carry them in his boſome and ſhould gently leade thoſe that are with young.* The Apoſtle diſtinguiſheth between the *ſtrong in faith and the weak in faith, Rom.* 14. 1. *and* 15. 1. Thus it hath

beene, and it is ſtill. Some are Chriſtians, come to maturity, others are in the bloſſome and bud: ſome are novices, *Catechumeni*, yongling in Chriſt; ſome are confirmed Chriſtians & ſtrong men in Chriſt. Which thing happens, Firſt becauſe of the ſutableneſſe of it to the condition of a body: For as it is in the naturall body, all members are not of equall growth, ſo it is in the myſticall body of Chriſt, *it is fitly joyned together and compacted by that which every joynt ſupplieth according to the effectuall working in the meaſure of each part.* Epheſ. 4. 16.

There

There is a different *measure of each part*, that there may be a meete Symmetry in the whole. Secõdly Besides *all members have not the same office*: And therefore Gods spirit gives not to all a like measure of knowledge and other gifts, *Rom.* 12. 4,6. Thirdly, Againe all parts have not a like meanes for growth, not a like instruction and nurture, not a like time for growth: There is a *different working in the severall parts*, and accordingly a different growth, *Ephes.* 4.16. Fourthly, If all Christians were of equall strength, Faith, wisdome, aud other graces, there

there would be a ſubtraction of the matter of ſundry principall duties; there would be no need one Chriſtian ſhould edifie one another, beare with one another, avoyd the offence of another, give helpe to another, reſtore one another, &c. *Wheras God hath ſo tempered the parts of the myſticall body as well as the naturall, that the members ſhould have the ſame care one of another*, 1. *Cor.* 12. 25.

§ 4. *In power and dignity*

2. In power, dignity, authority, wealth &c. Both in the Church, and in the world, ſome believers in Chriſt exceed others. Among many meane

meane Chriſtians, ſome are noble in birth and dignity: among many Chriſtian ſubjects there are ſome ſoveraigne Kings and Princes that are Chriſtians: among many illiterate believers there are ſome learned believers. In which thing God hath admirably ordered that as there ſhould be ſome nobles, ſome Princes, ſome learned among his people, that they may help & defend his Church: ſo there are not *many nobles, not many mighty, not many wiſe after the fleſh*, that the ſupport and raiſing of his Church may appeare not to be by an arme of fleſh, not

not by might, but by his ſpirit, *that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence.* 1. *Cor.* 1.26,29.

§. 5. *Beleivers commonly leſſe then others in the world.*

If wee compare them with others they are but little, I meane in dignity, ſecular honour, power, ſtrength among men. Except a *David* or a *Conſtantine*, and ſome other chriſtian Kings, how few of Gods people have injoyed any eminent degree of worldy glory? the triumphant Cō querors, the mighty Monarchs of the world have been moſt of them Infidels. The Almighty (that intends a better inheritance for his Saints *even a kingdome that cannot be ſhaken, Heb.* 12.28.)

Be-

beſtowes not on them the great Monarchies, Dominions, and dignities of this world, which are meaner gifts. And accordingly the world makes ſmall account of beleivers, as if they were but contemptible perſons: For the men of this world have eyes of fleſh, and fleſhly minds: they magnify and admire the world and the pompe thereof, ſumptuous palaces, gorgeous attire, great command, great obſervance and attendance: But the worth of ſpirituall excellencies, the glorious priviledges and endowments of Gods ſons they know not: even as Chriſt

Christ was unknowne in the world, so are his members, 1. *Iohn* 3. 1, 2.

§ 6. *Little in their owne eyes.*

Lastly those that believe in Christ are little in their owne eyes, that is humble, which (it's likely) was chiefly here meant by our Saviour. For to this Christ specially applyes the Embleme of a little child, *Math.* 18. 4. And in this sense *Saul* is said *to have been little in his own eyes*, 1. *Sam.* 15. 17. Thus certainly are all the Saints: *David* was as great in the eye of others as any man in the world in his age: yet he was not so great in the eyes of others, but he was as small in his owne. *Who am I*

(saith

ſaith he to God) 2. *Sam.* 7. 18. *and what is my houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?* And *Pſal.* 131. 1. &c. *Lord my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither doe I exerciſe my ſelfe in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted my ſelfe as a child that is weaned of his mother: my ſoule is even as a weaned child.* The reaſons hereof are 1. Becauſe by faith they behold Gods infinite greatneſſe, and then comparing themſelves with him, they cannot but thinke themſelves as nothing. *Abraham* was a great man in his time: he had great wealth,

wealth, and was ſo potent that by the forces of his owne houſhold hee overthrew foure conquering Kings: yet when he comes to ſpeake with God, hee doth in moſt humble manner acknowledge his owne meane condition: *Behold now, I have taken upon mee to ſpeake unto the Lord, who am but duſt and aſhes, Gen.* 18.27. When a man ſurveyes the earth by it ſelf, it is a great and vaſt body: but when it is compared with the heavens, it is *inſtar puncti*, but as a ſmall point that hath no quantity. So for thoſe men that looke on themſelves, or compare themſelves

ſelves with other men, or inferiour creatures, they are apt to imagine themſelves to *bee ſome great ones*, as *Simon Magus* vaunted himſelfe, *Acts*, 8. 9. But thoſe that acquaint themſelves with God, walke and converſe with him, they find ſuch an infinite diſproportion betweene God and themſelves, that they conceive themſelves as nothing, even lighter then vanity it ſelfe. 2. As by faith they behold Gods infinite greatneſſe, and thereby find themſelves as nothing: So by faith they behold Gods infinite power, riches and ſoveraignty, and thereby ſee that

that they have nothing, that the things they have are not their owne but Gods : that they have them from him, not by any merit of their owne, But *ex dono, of free gift: Nebuchadnezzar* he ſwels when hee lookes on his greatneſſe as his owne, *Is not this great* Babylon *that* I *have built for the houſe of the Kingdome, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majeſty? Dan.*4.30. But holy *David* is in another tune, *Thine O Lord is the greatneſſe, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the Majeſty : for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine: thine*

is

is the Kingdome (O Lord) and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reigneſt over all, and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give ſtrength unto all. But who am I, *and what is my people* &c. 1. *Chron:* 29. 11, 12, 14. And godly *Iacob*, *Gen:* 32. 10. קטנתי מכל החסדים *I am little* (the phraſe of my text) *in reſpect of all the mercies, & all the truth which thou haſt done to thy ſervant.* All was mercy and all the truth of God which he had, and therefore he was but little: the apprehenſion of this that all

all was to bee aſcribed to Gods truth and mercy, cauſed him to ſee nothing hee had that might puffe him up, though hee had much to be thankfull for: He doth not ſay, this is my houſe, my land, my dignity, my wit, &c. *But theſe are the lands, the children &c. which God hath given*, that hee hath lent me. He doth not take himſelfe to bee a proprietary, but a borrower, not a gayner of them, but a receiver. And therefore as a borrower thinks not himſelfe rich becauſe hee hath much ſubſtance in his hands of other mens, ſo neither doe beleivers thinke themſelves to bee great,

great, becauſe that which they have, they know it is but borrowed.

§ 7. *Application 1. to adverti ſe us of the eſtate of beleievrs in this world.*

For application of this truth, 1. We may hereby bee advertiſed what is the eſtate of beleivers in this life: ſome are leſſe then others, and all little in this world: ſo accounted by others, and by themſelves. The preſent condition in which they are is not the eſtate of men come to ripe yeares, but of children in their minority: of whom the Apoſtle ſayes, *Gal.* 4. 1. *that though they be heyres, yet as long as they are children they differ nothing from a ſervant, though they be Lords of all:* It is ſo with

with the Saints in this life, *all things are theirs, they are Christs, & Christ is Gods*, 1. *Cor.*3.22,23. yet they have command of nothing: nor perhaps the use of so much as wicked men. As it is with the heire of all his fathers goods, while he is young, he is set to schoole, there corrected, fares harder and hath lesse money in his purse, lesse to mannage then many of his Fathers servants: and yet all is his, and for him; so it is with Gods children, they are held hard to it, they have little in hand, they are low in the eyes of men, and in their owne, and yet this is no impedi-

ment

ment to their future glory: it's a preparative to their receiving their inheritance. The men of this world doe groſſely miſtake the caſe of Gods people: they imagine God neglects thē, becauſe they are not in high places, and great power on earth: but this is their folly, while they meaſure Gods love, and care of his people by their owne affections, not by Gods judgement, they imagine thoſe unhappy who are moſt bleſſed, and themſelves happy who are moſt accurſed.

§. 8. *2. To teach beleivers contentednesse in a low condition.*

2. Chriſts little ones ſhould bee wiſer, they ſhould know that their

preſent condition is to be little, and accordingly to bee contented with ſmall things, not mind great things in this world, as if they could not be happy without them; It was the end wherefore our Saviour uſed the Embleme of a little child, *Mat.* 18. 2. (to which the phraſe of little ones in my text alludeth) that he might admoniſh his Diſciples not to ſtrive for dignities, and precedencies, in this world. And S. *Paul Rom.* 12. 16. changeth chriſtians *not to mind high things, but to condeſcend to men of low eſtate.* Excellent was the advice of *Ieremiah* to *Baruch*, *Jerem.* 45. 5.

4.55. *Seekeſt thou great things for thy ſelfe? Seek them not.* Wee muſt remember for the preſent our condition is to have our allowance, and to bee ſtinted by God: and therefore ought to bee contented with it, though it ſeeme little, ſith wee know God is our Father, and though now wee bee little, yet hereafter hee will make us great, though now we be humbled, yet hereafter wee ſhall bee exalted: though wee bee now *poore in this world, yet wee are rich in God: and heyres of all things.*

§. 9. 3. *To quicken their hope after heaven.*

3. Anſwerably hereto it concernes them to

quicken their hope, and to excite their endeavours after thoſe great things which God hath prepared for them: The leſſe beleivers in Chriſt are now, the more ſhould they long for, and pant after their greatneſſe in heaven. By this they muſt comfort and ſupport their ſoules in their preſent condition: If they looke for great things on earth, they ſhall bee ſure to miſſe them, if they look for great things hereafter they ſhall bee ſure to have them. Heaven is their countrey, there is their preferment. On it they muſt fixe their hopes, by it they muſt ſuſtaine

ſtaine their ſoules.

§. 10. 4. *To aggravate the ſin of ſcandalizing beleivers.*

Laſtly this conſideration that ſcandalizing of them that beleive in Chriſt is the offending of little ones aggravateth much the ſinne of ſcandalizers. To trample little ones under foot, to injure, and harme little children, argues much pride and much unmercifullneſſe. Smallneſſe ſhould be the object of mercy, not of inſolency. And therefore in this reſpect the ſinne of perſecutors is great who ſcandalize Chriſts little ones, and accordingly their woe is great, which is the principall point of this verſe, and is now to be handled.

§. 11. *That the woe due to ſcandalizers of beleivers is greater then any temporall death.*

The ſecond obſervation and that which is the maine point in theſe words, is this: *That the puniſhment due to them that ſcandalize believers in Chriſt is greater then any temporall death though never ſo greivous.* This aſſertion needs no other confirmation then the words of the text rightly underſtood according to the explication before made. To which nevertheleſſe may bee added this argument: The puniſhment due to ſcandalizers of believers in Chriſt is eternall puniſhment in hell. For that ſuch is due to this ſinne, hath been proved before in declaring

ring the woe due to ſcandalizing in generall, and to each particular branch thereof. But it is certaine that no temporall death is or can be ſo grievous as eternall puniſhment in hell; none ſo ſharpe, and tormenting; none ſo conſtant and laſting: the bittereſt paines of the moſt lingring temporall death, being ſufferable, and finite, the other being intolerable, eternall, and ſo in a ſort infinite; now *finiti ad infinitũ nulla proportio, there's no proportion between a thing finite, and a thing infinite.* Therefore no temporall death can be equall to the puniſhment of ſcandalizers

of beleivers in Chriſt. But that I may diſtinctly handle the concluſion, it will be needfull to conſider, 1. Who are to bee accounted beleivers in Chriſt. 2. Why to the ſcandalizing of them there is ſo great vengeance allotted.

§. 12. *Who are to be accounted beleivers in Chriſt.*

To believe in Chriſt is to acknowledge in heart that he is the *Meſſias* that was to come into the world, to aſſent to the doctrine of the Goſpell which hee publiſhed, and to truſt in him for remiſſion of ſinnes and ſalvation: From hence men are denominated beleivers in Chriſt. So that they are indeed beleivers in Chriſt, who

who doe acknowledge in heart *that he is the Christ, the son, the living God*, that assent to his doctrine, and trust in him for righteousnes & salvation. My purpose is not to take occasion to cõsider exactly the nature and sorts of faith in Christ, nor the signes whereby that which is true and genuine is distinguished from counterfeit, imperfect, or defective. For at this time we are onely to consider whom another man is to take for a beleiver in Christ, whom hee ought to take heed of scandalizing. Onely thus much may be fit to be considered, that beleivers in

Chriſt may bee ſo called either according to Gods eſtimation, as they are in his ſight; And in this acception they onely are beleivers in Chriſt, who have the moſt excellent grace of faith planted in their hearts, by Gods ſpirit, by which they are united to Chriſt, dwell in him, live by and to him: which all that acknowledge the truth of the Goſpell in their profeſſion of it, or that yeild to it in mind a light and uneffectuall credulity to it, doe not. But theſe are only knowne by God, *Who alone ſearcheth the heart and reines.* Or elſe beleivers in Chriſt are called ſuch

ſuch according to that eſtimation man may make: And thus wee are to account all thoſe as beleivers in Chriſt, who knowing what they profeſſe doe without compulſion profeſſe themſelves beleivers in Chriſt, and doe not openly renounce either by ſpeech or practice the truth of Chriſtian faith, though they have much weakeneſſe of knowledge, many errours in opinion, and many ſinnes in their practice. In generall the number of thoſe who profeſſe freely their aſſent to the Articles of the creed, that joyne in the worſhip of Chriſt, and profeſſe

ſubjection

ſubjection to his precepts are to bee accounted by men as beleivers in Chriſt, the ſcandalizing of whom is ſo woefull.

§. 13. *Why ſo great vengeance is awarded to ſcandalizers of beleivers in Chriſt.*

The reaſons why ſo great a degree of puniſhment belongs to ſuch as ſcandalize beleivers in Chriſt, are 1. Becauſe Chriſt doth love them dearely, and they are of neare relation to him. The love of Chriſt to them is abundantly manifeſt in that ſuperlative expreſſion of it, his dying for them: *hee loved us*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Eph.5. 2. and hath given himſelfe for us an offering and a ſacrifice to God for a ſweet ſmelling ſavour.* And in like

like ſort are they moſt tenderly beloved of his Father, *Who ſo loved them, that he gave his only begotten Sonne, that whoſoever beleiveth on him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life*, *Iohn* 3. 16. And for their relation there is no relation of dearenesſe by which their indearednesſe to God the Father, and the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* is not expreſſed. They are his *little flock*, *Luke* 12. 32. And a good ſheepheard is tender over his flocke: they are his *ſervants*, *Iohn* 12. 26. And of theſe, good maſters are carefull: they are his friends, *Iohn* 16. 15. and true friends are very mindefull

mindefull of their friends: they are *his peculiar people, Tit.* 2.14. 1.*Pet.*2.9. and a good Prince is very tender of his peoples safety : they are his *brethren, Heb.*2.11.and true-hearted brethren are very regardfull of their brethrens good:they are *his children,v.* 13.*the sonnes of God,* 1.*Iohn* 3.1.*heires of God , joynt heires with Christ , Rom.* 8.17.and strong is the affection of a Father to his Child, his sonne, his heire: they are the *spouse of Christ,Eph.* 5.23.25. and what is a man more zealously affected to,then to his beloved spouse? they are *his members,v.*30.and what is

is it that a man will not give or doe to ſave his members? whence it is that he that ſheweth kindneſſe to them doth it to Chriſt, *Math.* 25.40. the neglecting of ſhewing mercy to them is a deniall of it to Chriſt, *v.* 45. And an offence to them *a ſinnne againg Chriſt*, 1. *Cor.* 8.12. Their ſufferings *Chriſts ſufferings*, *Coloſſ.* 1.24. This was the reaſon why Chriſt when he ſpake to *Saul* from heaven, going about the perſecuting of beleivers at *Damaſcus*, ſaid thus to him, *Saul, Saul why perſecuteſt thou me*, *Acts* 9.4, 5. *Saul* thought that hee had bent himſelfe onely againſt

againſt a company of peeviſh refractary people, whom hee thought worthy of all puniſhment for their obſtinate adhering to their profeſſion, by him conceived impious ſuperſtition, and hereſy: but it was indeed Chriſt himſelfe who was perſecuted, and ſtrucke at in their perſecutions. And ſo it is in all the perſecutions of beleivers for their faith and obedience. Now then Chriſt muſt needs be provoked greatly by the ſcandalizing of them whom hee loves ſo dearely, accounts ſo neare to him: Doubtleſſe what was ſaid of the Iewes, *Zech.*2.8. *Hee that toucheth*

eth you, toucheth the apple of his eye, is truely verified of all true beleivers, hee that toucheth them toucheth the apple (if I may ſo ſpeake) of Gods eye, which he will not let paſſe unrevenged. 2. The ſinne of ſcandalizing beleivers in Chriſt as it is againſt thoſe whom Chriſt loves, and are neare and deare to him, ſo it tends directly to the overthrow of Chriſts kingdome. For to what end are they perſecuted for the faith and ſervice of Chriſt, to what end are they tempted to ſinne, harmed in their conſciences, but that they may be alienated from Chriſt, with-

withdrawen from ſubjection to him, hindred in his ſervice? *Sauls* perſecuting of *David* is conſtrued as if hee had bid him goe ſerve other Gods, *they have driven me, ſaith* David, *out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, ſaying, goe ſerve other Gods.* 1.*Sam.*26.19. Nor can it be otherwiſe interpreted but that they which ſcandalize little ones that beleive in Chriſt for their faith and obedience ſake, doe as good as ſay, beleive not, obey not Chriſt. Now all ſuch cannot but fall heavily under the wrath of God, and of Chriſt Ieſus the univerſall

ſall Iudge. What he ſaid, *Luk.* 19.27. will be verified of them: *As for thoſe mine enemies that would not that I ſhould raigne over them, bring them hither, and ſlay them before me. For loe thine enemies O Lord, Loe thine enemies ſhall periſh, and all the workers of iniquity ſhall bee ſcattered. Pſal.* 92. 9. 3. As it tends to the overthrow of Chriſts kingdome, ſo eſpecially in the laſt ſorts of ſcandalizing it ariſeth out of hatred of Chriſt, his people, kingdome, and Goſpell; which ſhewes a moſt wicked heart, and cauſeth intollerable provocation to anger. 4. In the practice

practiſe of this ſinne, eſpecially by perſecution, what are ſcandalizers but as Satans hands to execute what hee inſtigates them to? Our Saviour in his Epiſtle to the Church of *Smyrna*, *Revel.* 2. 10. tells that Church *that the Divell ſhould caſt ſome of them into priſon that they might bee tryed, and they ſhould have tribulation ten dayes.* Are wee to thinke that the Divell did in his owne perſon lay hands on any of the beleivers of that Church, and by might hale them to priſon, as *Saul* intended to doe at *Damaſcus*? Nay, wee find no record for any ſuch thing, nor is it

it agreeable to the courſe of Gods providence whereby hee rules the world. But rather we are to thinke that the Divell is ſaid to caſt them into priſon, becauſe he excited the Infidell rulers of thoſe times to doe it, who therein tooke on them the perſon of the Divell as *Iudas* did, when he betrayed Chriſt, and *Peter* (though in another manner) when hee diſſwaded Chriſt from his willingneſſe to ſuffer. Now that which is promoted by Satan, who is the Father of all evill, and the grand enemy of Chriſt cannot but bee moſt odious to him, and procure his wrath,

wrath, ſpecially when men ſuffer themſelves to be made Satans profeſſed Agents and ſervants to doe his will.

§. 14. *Application 1. To manifeſt Chriſts tender care over his people.*

For application of this truth. 1. wee may hereby perceive the tender care which Chriſt hath over his people. He takes their ſcandals as if he himſelfe were ſcandalized, their injuries as his owne injuries, the perſecuting of them as the perſecuting of himſelfe, which hee will not ſuffer to eſcape unpuniſhed. *Pretious in the ſight of the Lord is the death of the Saints*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *Pſal.* 116.15. Their lives are pretious, and their death

is

is pretious. I may adde, even their reproaches, their injuries, their falſe accuſations, their ſcandalls are pretious, not ſold for nought, nor valued as no loſſe. Albeit ſometimes it may ſeeme ſo, yet it is not in truth ſo as the *Pſalmiſt* complaines, *Pſal.*44.12. *Thou ſelleſt thy people for nought, and doſt not increaſe by their price.* Nay rather *their haires are numbred, Luke* 12.7. *Hee that valewes ſparrowes,* doth not account his childrē as nought worth: doubtleſſe the meaneſt of his Saints hath *his teares bottled; and his flittings numbred, and all his injuries*

ries booked. Pſal. 56. 8. And that to ſome end, even that they may be recompenſed in them, revenged on their adverſaries. A great Cordiall this ſhould be to Chriſts little ones, to perſiſt in the faith notwithſtanding their ſcandalls, *ſith thus light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for them a farre more exceeding, & eternall weight of glory:* 2. *Cor.* 4. 17. And as it hath been ſome content to ſome ſpirits dying, that they knew their death ſhould not be unrevenged; ſo it may bee a comfort to beleivers, that their perſecutions ſhall be requited, hee will doe right

right to them, juſtice on their enemies.

§.15. *2. To teach us to commit our cauſe to him when we ſuffer for him.*

2. It ſhould further direct us when wee are ſcandalized to commit our cauſe to God, to our Lord Chriſt. Thus did *Zechariah* when they ſtoned him with ſtones, hee ſaid, *The Lord looke upon it, and require it.* 2. *Chr:* 24. 22. And thus did our Lord Chriſt 1. *Pet.* 2. 23. *when he ſuffered he threatned not, but committed himſelfe to him that judgeth righteouſly.* So ſhould we: elſe wee intrence on Gods prerogative, who hath ſaid, *vengeance is mine and I will repay. Rom:* 12. 19. wee diſadvantage our ſelves by hindering

the recompence of our patience, wee marre our cauſe by making it evill, which otherwiſe would be good, wee harme our ſelves by moving God to anger for our miſcarriage. Its our wiſdome to forbeare avenging our ſelvs, elſe we ſhall ſhew that we remember not Chriſts love to us, nor truſt his care over us.

§. 16. *3. To advertiſe ſcandalizers of the greatneſſe of their ſin, and puniſhment.*

3. From hence ſcandalizers may take the right meaſure of their ſinne: and the greatneſſe of their puniſhment. They thinke commonly when they perſecute beleivers, godly preachers, faithfull chriſtians, they doe but ſpeake againſt, and vexe, and

and oppoſe a company of peeviſh, preciſe, ſilly weak folke. Thus did *Paul* imagine when he perſecuted the Church of God. But Chriſt told him otherwiſe, *I am Ieſus whom thou perſecuteſt. Acts. 9. 5.* And ſo doe all that are moved by the ſame ſpirit, and walke the ſame way. For wherefore are beleivers hated? Is it not for their conſtancy in the faith, their profeſſion of the truth, their zeale to Chriſts kingdome, their obedience to his precepts? The ſcandalizing of them then can bee no other but an offence of Chriſt. There may bee ſome that may thinke

they love Christ, and yet ſcandalize his little ones. But this cannot bee: the love of Christ and of the brethren goe together, as S. *Iohn* ſtrongly proves, in his firſt Epiſtle. Know then, that ſcandalizing of Chriſts members is no leſſe then the offending of Chriſt, and will be puniſhed, as if his perſon were directly ſtruck at. *Behold the Lord commeth with ten thouſands of his Saints to execute Iudgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, and of all their hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him.* Iude

Iude 14.15.

§. 17. 4. *To deterre them from their ſin.*

Laſtly this may ſtartle thoſe that practiſe this courſe of ſcandalizing: thoſe that beleive in Chriſt are in appearance little ones, of ſmall power, contemptible, and therefore they are ready to think they may harme them with impunity. But it were good for them to remember *Solomons* caveat *Prov.* 22.22,23. *Robbe not the poore becauſe he is poore: neither oppreſſe the afflicted in the gate. For the Lord will pleade their cauſe, and ſpoyle the ſoule of them that ſpoyled them.* Conſider what a doome is here threatned to ſcandalizers of beleivers. Bee

assured that Gods righteousnesse, his love to his people, his owne cause requires this severity at his hands. Know that ther's no escaping unlesse they could fight against God, and were stronger then hee. Provoke not then a couragious Lion, stirre not up the wrath of the Omnipotent God. *Touch not his annointed, doe his Prophets no harme.* Shew them all kindnesses on earth, that what they cannot, their Saviour may recompense in heaven: *that when yee faile they may receive you into everlasting habitations.*

FINIS.